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GEORGE ELIOT'S

THE MILL ON THE FLOSS

ABRIDGED & WITH A CRITICAL INTRODUCTION

old

BY

RAMJI LALL M.A.

Formerly Head of the Department of English,
Camp College, New Delhi.

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GEORGE ELIOT

1. Life

Mary Ann Evans, who is known to her readers by her pen name of George Eliot, was born in Warwickshire in 1819. A few months after her birth, the family moved to another home, in the parish of Griff, where her childhood was largely passed. The scenery of Midland countries and many details of her family life are reflected in her earlier novels. For a few years she studied at two private schools ; but the death of her mother made it necessary for her to leave school at the age of seventeen to take charge of her father's house. Thereafter her education was gained wholly by miscellaneous reading. She continued to study French, German, Italian, Latin, Greek and Music. In one of her earlier letters, referring to her reading, she says, "My mind presents an assemblage of disjointed specimens of history, ancient and modern, scraps of poetry picked up from Shakespeare, Cowper, Wordsworth and Milton, newspaper topics, morsels of Addison and Bacon, Latin verbs, Geometry, entomology, and Chemistry ; reviews and metaphysics, all arrested and smothered by the fast-thickening everyday accession of actual events, relative anxieties and household cares and vexations." At this time Mary Ann was profoundly religious, and so firm a believer as to think that no salvation was possible for anyone who did not reach the proper standard of orthodoxy. Her early letters are full of quotations from scriptures, and she was so ascetic that on her first visit to London in 1838, she would not go to any theatre. However, she was not the person to remain contented for a long time with beliefs accepted by authority. Soon she experienced a spiritual crisis and her powerful intellect forced her to question everything and not to take anything for granted or on trust. "I admit discussion" she says at a later date, "on every matter except dinner and debts. I hold that the first must be eaten and the second must be paid. These are my only prejudices." Her spiritual struggle was accentuated by her association with the Bray

family whom she came to know when her father shifted to the neighbourhood of Coventry in 1841. The effect of the liberal atmosphere in the home of the Bray family was to unsettle many of the youthful convictions of Mary Ann. Her spiritual struggle, which reminds us of Carlyle, is undoubtedly the cause of that gloom and depression which pervade much of her work.

Mary Ann already felt the attraction of literature and had written a little. But her association with the Bray family led to a greater zeal for literature. Her earliest published work was a religious poem which appeared in 1840. In 1846 she completed her English translation of a German work called *Leben Jesu*. Mary Ann was an excellent linguist, having a wide acquaintance with Latin and Greek literature as well as with French, German and Italian. In the course of her translation of Strauss's *Leben Jesu*, she felt the need of Hebrew and forthwith began to study that language. She was also widely read in contemporary speculation, both on its scientific and on its philosophic sides. The result of this philosophic study was that, in her later works, we get more of philosophy than of real life, more of theory than of observation, more of reasoning than of intuition.

Like all writers, Mary Ann felt the attraction of London. So long as her father lived, she could not leave him. He died in 1849. The Brays then took her to the Continent. On her return to England she settled in London. Her residence in London at this time marks the turning point in her career and the real beginning of her literary life. At the house of the Bray family she met John Chapman who had just become editor of *The Westminster Review*. Some time later, John Chapman bought the paper and offered the post of assistant editor to Mary Ann. She accepted the offer and began to lodge with the Chapmans. This work was interesting for her but soon Chapman's wife grew jealous of her. Chapman and Mary Ann were not exactly lovers but they certainly enjoyed each other's company and had certain common interests. In fact, Chapman was at that time flirting with his childern's governess and Mrs. Chapman was tolerating this affair. But now finding that Chapman was also feeling drawn towards Mary Ann, both Mrs. Chapman and the

governess combined to drive out Mary Ann. Mary Ann was furious and returned to Coventry. But Chapman went after her and brought her back, with the consent of his wife and the governess. She spent two years in Chapman's house and the three women managed somehow to live peacefully, tolerating one another, while Chapman, no doubt, enjoyed the love of all the three.

Mary Ann was now in the full swim of the literary life of the English metropolis. She made the acquaintance of several celebrated personalities like Dickens, Froude, Huxley and Mill. She became an intimate friend of Herbert Spencer. Everybody thought that this friendship would lead to marriage between the two but that did not happen. Spencer's influence on her was very important in one way : it was he who first suggested to her to try her hand at writing novels.

Through Herbert Spencer, Mary Ann made the acquaintance of George Henry Lewes, a miscellaneous writer and journalist. Lewes was a married man but was living separately from his wife. His wife had been seduced by Thornton Hunt (son of Leigh Hunt) and had given birth to two children by him. The English law of the time did not permit Lewes to obtain a divorce. So he lived apart from his wife and her children and paid them a regular maintenance allowance. Mary Ann and Lewes now fell deeply in love with each other. Conventional morality was sternly against any sexual relationship between the two. Mary Ann had been brought up in an atmosphere of orthodoxy, and even though she had shed her early orthodoxy, her sense of respectability stood in the way of her developing an intimacy with Lewes. All her past breeding was against an illegal relationship with Lewes but the passion of love proved stronger than all other considerations and she began to live with him as his unmarried wife. She was no longer lonely. She had found the fulfilment of her emotional cravings and she was happy. However, her connection with Lewes still remains a controversial aspect of her life. In the literary sense, the influence of Lewes upon Mary Ann was excellent. He made her aware of her gift for fiction and encouraged her to write the story called *Amos Barton*. He was always ready with sympathy,

help and suggestion. He shielded her against harsh criticism. Indeed, he had a lot to do with the nurture of her genius.

She now began to write stories for the magazines, her first story, as has been indicated above being *Amos Barton* (1857), which was later included in the *Scenes of Clerical Life* (1858) Her first long novel, *Adam Bede*, appeared early in 1859 and was received with great popular enthusiasm and favour. The unexpected success of this novel inspired her to write her next work, *The Mill On The Floss* (1860) which was followed by *Silas Marner* (1861). She had pubslihed all these books under her pen-name of George Eliot and the public did not know the identity of the author till the great success of these works led to an insistent demand from them to know who the author was. The public was, indeed, surprised to know that the author was a woman. In 1863, came her next novel *Romola*. It was the most laborious of all her works She made a study of Florentine history to qualify herself for the task of writing that book. The labour was such a heavy strain upon her that she said that she had begun the book as a young woman and ended it as an old woman. *Romòla* is another turning point in the career of George Eliot. The books that came afterwards betray a sense of effort which was completely absent from her early books. The easy mastery was now gone and we see marks of labour where before there was spontaneity. In 1866 came her next novel *Felix Holt*. The two parts of *Middlemarch* appeard in 1871 and 1872. Her last novel *Daniel Deronda* followed in 1876. Her life during all this time was singularly uneventful, the publication of her successive novels being the only important milestones.

During all the years of her literary successes, Lewes had been a most sympathetic friend, guide and critic. When he died in 1878, George Eliot suffered a heavy blow. Her letters of this period are touching because of her sense of loneliness and desolation. Later, she married J. W. Cross, who was much younger than herself. This marriage came as a complete surprise to everybody, but George Eliot, even at this stage, wanted someone whom she could love and whom she could depend upon. Her new interest in life lasted but a few months because she died in December of the same year (1880).

2. Novels Of George Eliot

George Eliot's novels are easily divisible into two groups. The first group includes *Scenes of Clerical Life*, *Adam Bede*, *The Mill On The Floss* and *Silas Marner*, all published between 1858 and 1861. The material for these four novels is largely drawn from the author's own life and experiences, and their characters are taken from among the people with whom George Eliot had been familiar since childhood. These four novels show a rapid development of the writer's literary powers which reach their climax in *Silas Marner*. They show a spontaneity and a sense of humour which are lacking in her later works.

The scond group of her novels includes *Romola* (1862-1863) *Felix Holt* (1866) *Middlemarch* (1871-1872) and *Daniel Deronda* (1876). The general impression of the novels of this group is not so favourable as that of the first group. The novels of the second group are more laboured and less interesting. They contain much reflection and psychological analysis but less observation and less inspiration. However, there are certain critics who consider *Daniel Deronda* as "the highest expression of the author's genius".

3. George Eliot as a Novelist

The most striking quality of the novels of George Eliot is **psychological realism**. In other words, George Eliot tried to do in her novels what Browing did in his poetry. She represents in her novels the inner struggle of a soul, and reveals the motives, impulses and hereditary influences which govern human action. She is not content with describing outward action but, in the course of the naration, halts often to reveal the working of the mind of the characters. It is the development of a soul, the slow growth or decline of moral powers, which chiefly interests her. Her characters are not already formed when we meet them. On the contrary, the characters develop gradually in the course of the history. They go from weakness to strength or from strength to weakness, according to the actions that they perform and the thoughts that they think. This is quite clear from *The Mill On The Floss* in which both Maggie and Tom are

shown to us growing, not only physically and in respect of years, but also in the moral sense. George Eliot is not content with a picture of human life as it appears. She tries to pierce behind the shows of things, and to reveal the forces by which they are controlled. Accordingly, she analyses her characters. In the case of the simple types, this analysis takes the form of brief and rapid comment. For instance, we are told that Mrs. Tulliver was like the goldfish who continues to butt his head against the encircting globe. This comment of the novelist on Mrs. Tulliver at once brings before us the type of person who is incapable of learning from experience. In the case of the more developed characters, the analysis is more elaborate and more sustained. The most characteristic passages in these novels are those in which she follows the ebb and flow of decision in a character's mind, dwelling on the triumph or defeat of the personality in a drama where there is but one actor. Such a drama is that of Maggie Tulliver who is torn between the desire to make her own life happy and the strong feeling that she cannot be really happy by sacrificing the happiness of others.

As for the realism of her novels, George Eliot was largely dependent on the material of her own early life. In the novels of the first group (*Adam Bede*, *The Mill On The Floss*, *Silas Marner*) especially, the characters are largely taken from the circle of George Eliot's acquaintances and family life. Scene after scene, and character after character, in these novels, have been identified with some place or person within the range of her early experiences. The character of Dinah Morris in Adam Bede is based upon that of George Eliot's aunt. Mrs. Poyser in the same novel shows some of the qualities of George Eliot's mother. Adam Bede was drawn from George Eliot's father. In *The Mill On The Floss*, the personal and autobiographical element is very prominent.

As a moralist : The chief function of George Eliot as a writer is the interpretation of the world in terms of morality. She does not deal with political questions nor primarily with industrial or social problems. Her ethical motive is a broader one than the emancipation of thought or the formulation of a political programme. It is to show how in obedience to moral

law character grows or decays; how a single fault or flaw brings suffering, death and throws the world into ruin; how, on the other hand, moral improvement may come through suffering and even through sin, through renunciation and self-sacrifice of the individual. With George Eliot, moral law is like fate; it overwhelms freedom and inclination; it was to her as inevitable and automatic as gravitation. A certain act produces a definite moral effect on the individual; and character is the sum total of the acts of a man's life, just as the weight of a body is the sum of the weights of many different atoms which constitute it.

The tragic character of her fiction: The novels of George Eliot are all rather depressing. On one occasion, when her husband remarked that her novels were all essentially sad she wept and replied that she must describe life as she found it. The gladness of life and the sunshine or smiles and laughter are not to be found in her novels. The story of *The Mill On The Floss* is overwhelmingly sad, in spite of the humour which bubbles forth here and there. *Adam Bede* and *Silas Marner* are also sad and tragic stories. Though George Eliot's stories are of the tragedy of life, it is not surely the tragedy of the circumstance so much as the tragedy of lost opportunities. There are many occasions in the lives of her characters when a stronger resolve would have led to a bright future for them.

The philosophical element: The novels of the first group (*Scenes of Clerical Life*, *Adam Bede*, *The Mill On The Floss*, and *Silas Marner*) possess a spontaneity and flashes of real humour which are lacking in the later novels. The novels of the first group show a rapid development of literary power which reaches a climax in *Silas Marner*. The later novels (*Romola*, *Felix Holt*, *Middlemarch*, and *Daniel Deronda*) are laboured and less interesting. They contain much deep reflection and philosophical comment. The philosophical comments in these novels interfere with their artistic character. These novels seem to be a conscious and deliberate treatment of certain problems, with the analytical element in prominence. Her earlier novels with their charming pictures

of the life of the country and of small towns, possess a freshness and interest which are absent from the later novels. The later novels are overweighed by thought and philosophy. And yet there are critics who think that the greatness of George Eliot as a novelist is based upon these later novels. They argue that in these later novels there is a seriousness of purpose, and a depth of thought not to be matched in the work of any other novelist.

Characterization : George Eliot is happiest in characterization ; here we find both subtlety and variety. Florentine characters, half-witted rustics, cultured free thinkers, wayward and passionate natures, shallow and insincere characters, mystics, men of the world—all these are to be found in her novels. Her wide range of observation and her generous sympathies helped to give breadth and variety to her canvas. In the earlier novels, particularly, the characters are alive in every limb. Serious and comic, simple and deep, thoughtful and foolish, they are all convincing. The portraits of women, it has been said, are better than those of the men. Yet George Eliot in her portrayal of the masculine character stands far above any other female writer. Indeed, George Eliot has created a brilliant gallery of living and convincing male and female characters. The characters of earlier novels are taken from circles that were familiar to George Eliot. In the case of later novels, she had to go far afield for characters and themes. In *Romola*, for instance, it is a foreign land (Italy) and a distant age (Renaissance). The Italian characters in this novel are, however, not convincingly Italian. This novel is not quite true to the people which it tries to represent.

As a humorist : Although the general atmosphere of her novels is sad, yet the element of humour is not absent. Of course the element of humour is found chiefly in the earlier novels while in the later novels, both the quality and the quantity of her humour decline. George Eliot excels in the unconscious kind of humour. In other words, the humorous characters in her novels are not themselves aware that they are a source of humour. For instance, we laugh at Mrs. Glegg and at Mrs. Pullet, but Mrs. Glegg and Mrs. Pullet themselves do

not know that there is anything in them to laugh at. Similarly the copious talk of Bob Jakin amuses us a good deal but Bob Jakin does not talk with the conscious purpose of amusing his listeners The humour in George Eliot's novels is mainly found in characters of humble rank or of imperfect education and moderate intelligence. Her greatest triumphs in humour are to be found in *Adam Bede* and *The Mill On The Floss.*

Conclusion : "There is no doubt whatever that George Eliot is a great novelist. Her awareness of life is both wide and deep. She is one of the most intellectual of English novelists, but with her intellectual power goes no tinge of contempt, nothing that dries up her sympathy with average men and women. She uses a mind nourished by philosophy and learning to express the significance of ordinary lives. With that firm and elaborate delineation of individual character of which Henry James spoke, is combined a genius for bringing each character to life, not only as an individual but as part of the social pattern. Her vision is whole. For her there is no division between the inner and outer life, between the profound emotion, the agonizing spiritual conflict, and the bargain in the lawyer's office, the election brawl, the gossip in farm kitchen or tap room. All is unified by her deep-rooted love of humanity. Beneath all her faithful and often humorous rendering of its meannesses and absurdities lies her sense of its potential grandeur.

"She is vividly aware of its humour. Infinitely pompous and solemn in her private correspondence, she shows in all her novels the shrewd and racy humour of an old countrywoman which only breaks down when she is handling one of her idealized characters or one of those too closely identified with herself. Her dialogue is nearly always masterly. The tirades of her vigorous older women, the talk of men idling or working together, have the veracity of simple poetry, and reveal the nature of the speakers more effectively than any description.

"George Eliot's particular contribution to the English novel is that she left it aware of character on a very much deeper level. Her analysis of motives is penetrating, and she has more

understanding than any English novelist writing before Freud of the undercurrents of mind and heart. Because her human beings are more complicated and more mixed than those of the novelists who preceded her, they are nearer to the truth of human nature. This penetration is not only of the intellect, it is born of a harmony between mind and feeling, illuminated by compassion and love for humanity. In her best work there is a depth and reality that no English novelist has surpassed, nor can any of them surpass her in her power of taking the reader into her created world" *Lettice Cooper.*

THEMES OF THE VARIOUS NOVELS OF GEORGE ELIOT

Adam Bede : Adam Bede, a village carpenter is in love with Hetty Sorrel, a pretty, vain, selfish niece of a farmer, Martin Poyser. Deceived by the hope of marriage with a young squire, Arthur Donnithorne, she allows him to seduce her. Arthur Donnithorne then deserts her. Hetty, feeling terribly grieved, agrees to marry Adam Bede. But, before the marriage, Hetty discovers that she is pregnant and flies from home to seek Arthur. She fails to find him. An illegitimate child is born to her, but she murders the infant. She is arrested, convicted of the murder of her child, and transported. After a time, Adam discovers that he has won the heart of Dinah Morris, a young female preacher. Although Adam's brother, Seth, has for a long time loved Dinah, he now unselfishly gives her up for the sake of his brother.

The Mill On The Floss : This is the story chiefly of a girl, Maggie Tulliver. From her childhood onwards she craves for the love of her brother, but her brother is rather indifferent to her and sometimes even callous. The story narrates the vicissitudes in the life of Maggie Tulliver from childhood onwards. Maggie's father, Mr. Tulliver, ruins himself through a law suit. Mr. Tulliver has developed a fierce hatred of the lawyer, Wakem, who is chiefly responsible for Mr. Tulliver's defeat in the law suit. Maggie falls in love with Philip, the son of the lawyer, Wakem. Philip, a hunchback, also loves Maggie deeply. But Tom cannot tolerate this love affair and puts an end to it. Subsequently, Maggie falls in love with Stephen who was half engaged to Maggie's cousin Lucy. Maggie and Stephen elope,

but Maggie soon returns without marrying Stephen, because her moral scruples prove too strong and she feels that by marrying Stephen she would be breaking the hearts of Lucy and Philip. Tom is now completely alienated from her. But then a flood in the river Floss comes. Maggie goes in a boat to rescue her brother whom she has never ceased to love. Tom feels overwhelmed by the risk that Maggie has taken in coming for his rescue. Brother and sister are reconciled to each other. But the boat sinks and the two perish. There is an interesting group of uncles and aunts in the story and they provide plenty of unconscious humour. Bob Jakin, the copious talker, also deserves mention for his amusing and spicy talk.

Silas Marner : Silas Marner is a handloom weaver, a good man whose life has been wrecked by a false accusation of theft. For years he lives a lonely life. He is saved from his own despair by the chance finding of a little girl. He lavishes all his affection and love upon this girl and brings her up like a daughter. After sixteen years, the real father of the girl, a squire, claims the girl, but fails to win her from the weaver.

On this slight framework are hung the richest pictures of middle and low class life that George Eliot has painted. The foolish talkative rustics who meet regularly at Rainbow inn to drink beer and to gossip are fully made to live before us. But perhaps the best character in the book is Dolly Winthrop, the wheelwright's wife, who looks in every day to comfort Silas.

Felix Holt : As a picture of upper middle class and industrial English life of the period of the Reform Bill agitation, this book is unsurpassed. Felix Holt is a noble-minded young reformer who deliberately chooses the life of humble workman in order to convince his fellow workers that the hope of an improvement in their conditions lies in education and in learning to think for themselves, and not in this or that legislative programme.

Felix Holt is a young man whose capacity might attain anything, if his overmastering conscience would let him conform to the ways of a comfort-loving world. But he throws away his chances, comes near to shipwrecking his happiness, and accepts

his unpleasant position as a matter of course. Contrasted with his roughness and noble intolerance is the charming daintiness of the exquisite Esther Lyon whom he loves. The minor characters stand out vivid and distinct. The story is complicated by involved legal questions. Many readers feel disappointed with this novel on account of melodramatic and improbable elements in the story. But some critics consider it one of George Eliot's best achievements. It is bright in tone and its humour is rich and pervading.

Romola : The scene of this historical novel is laid in Florence at the end of the 15th century and its great historical figure is Savonarola. The pages of the novel are crowded with action relating to the civic struggle between the Medici and the French domination, and the religious struggle between the dying Paganism and the new Christianity. The story follows the fortunes of a young and clever but false Greek, whose name is Tito. He marries Romola, the noble-natured and devoted daughter of an old blind scholar. But Tito wounds Romola's deepest feelings afterwards by betraying her father's solemn trust. Romola, with her love for her husband turned to contempt and her faith in Savonarola destroyed, discovers that her duty lies in self-sacrifice. Savonarola loses his influence over the city ; he is tried, condemned and executed. The novel is strongly ethical but not the less profoundly interesting as a story. The lower classes are fully delineated and the talk of the crowd, in the squares and streets, is full of humour and reality.

Middlemarch : The novel takes its name from the town of Middlemarch where the scene of the story is laid. The book is really made up of two stories, one centring around Dorothea Brooke and the other around Rosamond Vincy. In both series we witness a hopeful beginning followed by frustration and unhappiness (*i*) Dorothea has a longing for a lofty mission and this leads her to marry an elderly and wealthy clergyman, Rev. Edward Cassaubon. She hopes to make her husband happy by helping him in his literary work, but is much grieved to find that he does not value her services at all. In other ways, too, she feels disillusioned with her husband who dies a year and a half after their marriage. (*ii*) Rosamond Vincy is a

beautiful girl with lofty matrimonial aspirations. She wins the love of Dr. Lydgate who, though nephew to a baronet, has a hard struggle to establish himself as a physician. Neither he nor she knows how to economize, and the latter, feeling her husband's poverty as an insult to herself, is a hindrance to him in every way. The story of his efforts to maintain his family, and at the same time to be true to his professional ambitions, is a sad one. There is a large group of minor characters, too, to add to the dimensions of the story. George Eliot herself thought this book as her greatest but, on acccount of the division of interest, the construction of the story has been severely criticized by critics as clumsy and inartistic.

Daniel Deronda: This is the last novel of George Eliot. Considered by some critics as her greatest work, it has repelled others by its careful analysis of the Jewish character. It really has two separate parts, and two chief figures, each very unlike the other. Gwendolen Harleth, the heroine and Daniel Deronda, the hero, first see each other at a gaming table. Out of sheer selfishness, Gwendolen Harleth, who is beautiful and penniless, marries Grandcourt, nephew of Deronda's guardian, Sir Hugh Mallinger. The tragedy of her married life is told with dramatic force and profound insight. Deronda has been brought up by Sir Hugh in ignorance of his parentage. By befriending a Jewish girl, he comes in close contact with several Jewish families, grows deeply interested in Jewish history and religion and then discovers that he is himself of Jewish birth. The influence of Deronda on Gwendolen is very marked, and the story closes with the proph cy of a lessening selfishness and egotism on her part. In writing this novel, George Eliot had three objects in view.

(*i*) to show the influence of heredity ;

(*ii*) to show that ideals and sentiments lie at the basis of religion ;

and (*iii*) to contrast a social life founded on Jewish tradition with mere individualism. As a plea for the Jews, this book not only met the approval of the thoughtful men of that race, but also gave to the world in general a just idea of this complex people.

THE MILL ON THE FLOSS

1. Complete Summry of the Novel

Book 1. (Boy and Girl) : *The Mill On The Floss* is the story chiefly of Maggie and Tom. The story narrates the vicissitudes in the lives of Maggie and Tom from childhood onwards. Maggie and Tom were the children of Mr. and Mrs. Tulliver who owned a flour mill known as Dorlcote Mill which stood on the banks of the river Floss. Mr. Tulliver had married Miss Elizabeth Dodson, the youngest of four daughters of the Dodson family, the other three daughters being Jane, Sophy and Susan, all of whom were married. After marriage Elizabeth or Bessy had become Mrs. Tulliver, Jane had become Mrs. Glegg ; Sophy had become Mrs. Pullet, and Susan had become Mrs. Deane. All the three sisters of Bessy were fairly prosperous. Bessy's husband, though not quite rich, was supposed to be well-to-do. Mr. Tulliver had a sister Gritty who had married a rather poor man by the name of Moss. Thus Maggie and Tom had quite a number of uncles and aunts but they did not like anyone of them except aunt Gritty (Mrs. Moss).

At the time the story begins Maggie was nine years old and Tom was four years older. Tom was believed to have taken after his mother's family, while Maggie had something of her father in her. Tom was somewhat slow of thinking but Maggie to whom her father generally referred as "the little wench" was thought to be very cute and clever. Mr. and Mrs. Deane had a daughter Lucy who was almost of the same age as Maggie. While Maggie was a mischievous and somewhat rebellious girl, Lucy was gentle like a lamb. Maggie's hair was very refractory and did not curl easily. Her hair was a source of constant irritation to Maggie's mother. While Mr. Tulliver was more fond of Maggie, Mrs. Tulliver was more fond of the boy. The uncles and aunts, excepting Mrs. Moss, were generally critical of the habits and behaviour of Maggie and Tom. Lucy was thought to be a much better-behaved girl.

Under the advice of Mr. Riley, an auctioneer and arbitrator by profession, Mr. Tulliver decided to send his son to King's Lorton to be educated by the Rev. Walter Stelling. The uncles

and aunts were not in favour of this proposition as they believed that Tulliver was going to give an education to Tom much above his means and resources. But Tulliver stuck to this proposition. Tulliver's attitude led to a lot of unpleasantness between him and Mrs. Glegg to whom Tulliver owed five hundred pounds which he had taken as a loan. Tulliver said that he would pay off this amount to her very soon.

Maggie was deeply attached to her brother Tom. She always wanted to be in his company. The slightest indifference on the part of Tom used to hurt her greatly. Tom also loved his sister but not to the same extent. Sometimes Tom scolded her and thus made her very wretched and miserable. Tom sometimes called her silly and stupid but that did not affect Maggie's devotion towards him. Maggie was often scolded by her mother also, especially because of her hair which, as has been said above, did not curl easily. On one occasion when her mother scolded her about her ill-kept hair, she cut her hair short with a large pair of scissors as a protest. With her hair cut short, Maggie looked ridiculous and Tom began to laugh at her. Tom's laughing hurt Maggie deeply and she broke into sobs. The uncles and aunts were present in the house on this occasion. They all scolded her for having cut her hair but her father took her side.

On another occasion, Maggie pushed Lucy into mud because Tom preferred Lucy's company to Maggie's company. Maggie did so in a fit of jealousy. Tom hit her for thus misbehaving towards Lucy. Thereupon Maggie ran away to live with the gypsies but was brought back home the same evening by one of the gypsies.

Mr. Tulliver had lent an amount of three hundred pounds to his brother-in-law, Mr. Moss, against a promissory note. Now he wanted that amount back so as to be able to pay off Mrs. Glegg. He had no cash in hand and a loan was difficult to obtain without mortgaging the mill and the house which he said he would never mortgage. His freehold land was already under a mortgage of two thousand pounds and he was making half-yearly payments to get it released from mortgage. Accordingly, he paid a visit to his sister Moss, and asked for the amount of three hundred pounds. But when he heard his

sister's tale of financial woes, his brotherly feelings were greatly touched and he told her not to worry about the money. Tulliver was determined to arrange for money in order to pay off Mrs. Glegg. So he got a loan of five hundred pounds with his household effects as the security. Thus he paid off Mrs. Glegg.

Book II (School Time): In accordance with the advice of Mr. Riley, Tom was put under the charge of Rev. Stelling at King's Lorton. During the first quarter Tom was rather unhappy. He did not make much progress in his studies. His shyness added to his misery. He did not much understand the complexities of Latin grammar, etymology, and goemetrical demonstrations. Apart from his studies, he had to look after Laura, the little daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Stelling. During this period Maggie came to see Tom and stayed in Mr. Stelling's house for a fortnight. Maggie's stay proved to be a great comfort to Tom. He missed her greatly when she was gone. At last the dreary half year at school ended and Tom returned home for the Christmas holidays. Christmas at home was quite cheerful but Tom's father was in a mood of depression during this period. Mr. Tulliver was having trouble with a certain Mr. Pivart. Mr. Pivart had bought farm land higher up the river and was taking measures for its irrigation. This meant an infringement on Mr. Tulliver's legitimate share of water-power. It seemed to Mr. Tulliver that he would have to go to law for a decision in his favour. Mr. Pivart was backed and supported by a rascally lawyer called Wakem, whom Mr. Tulliver hated deeply. Mrs. Tulliver tried to dissuade her husband from entering into litigation but Mr. Tulliver had already made up his mind on this subject. The holidays ended and Tom went back to King's Lorton. Now Tom found a companion. This was a boy called Philip. Philip was the son of the lawyer, Wakem. Philip was a boy of artistic tastes. He was a hump-back. He helped Tom with his studies. But Tom was determined not to become intimate with the son of his father's enemy. Maggie came on another visit to her brother. She thought Philip a nice boy. She became quite friendly with Philip and even allowed him to kiss her before she left for home. Tom still thought of Philip as a queer fellow, a hump-back and the son of a rogue.

So Tom went on to the fifth half year. He was now sixteen. Maggie was growing rapidly. She was receiving her education at a boarding school. Her cousin Lucy was also there. In the meanwhile, the law suit between Mr. Tulliver and Mr. Pivart had begun. Wakem was Pivart's lawyer. Even Maggie now realized that there could be no question of any intimacy with Philip again. The very name of Wakem made her father angry.

During the last quarter at school, Tom's studies were interrupted on account of a family disaster. Mr. Tulliver lost the law-suit. He had incurred heavy expenses in this litigation. Losing the law suit meant that all his property would be sold out. The grief of Tom and Maggie cannot be described. But that was not the end of their misfortune. Mr. Tulliver, in a frenzy of grief, fell down from his horse and suffered a stroke of paralysis. Tom left school and returned home.

Book III (The Downfall): The financial complications which had given a heavy shock to Mr. Tulliver and brought on a stroke of paralysis were as follows. He lost the law suit against Pivart. But that did not break his spirit because he did not realise that the costs of that suit would amount to more money than he possessed or than even the value of his property. He remembered that his land was still under mortgage to Mr. Furley who was supposed to be a reasonable fellow. Mr. Tulliver thought that he could sell his whole property including the mill and the house to Furley and then continue to live where he was as Mr. Furley's tenant. But one unfortunate factor that occurred to him was that the creditor who had lent him five hundred pounds a few months earlier to repay Mr. Glegg had become uneasy about his money and that it had become necessary for Mr. Tulliver to give to his creditor a bill of sale on his household furniture and other household belongings as security against the loan. Now it seemed that the bill of sale would be enforced unless the money were repaid. Mr. Tulliver consoled himself with the thought that his wife might succeed in prevailing upon Mr. and Mrs. Pullet to advance him the money with his household effects as security so as to prevent enforcement of the said bill of sale. What really broke Mr. Tulliver's spirit was the

information that Mr. Furley had some time earlier transferred the mortgage of Mr. Tulliver's land to the lawyer, Wakem. This piece of information was contained in a letter which he received from his attorney. He had read this letter sitting on horse-back. The shock of the letter had been too much for him to bear. He had fallen down from his horse and been found by his own waggoner lying unconscious by the roadside. He had been carried home where he recovered consciousness for a little while and then relapsed into unconsciousness.

In this hour of crisis, Mrs. Tulliver sent for her sisters and brothers-in-law. They all arrived and saw that the ruin of Bessy and her family was complete. Mrs. Tulliver could not bear the thought of her household effects being sold by auction. Tom and Maggie felt very annoyed at the unhelpful and unsympathetic attitude of the aunts and uncles. The aunts and uncles did nothing substantial to relieve the financial distress of the Tulliver family. They did not even buy the furniture and other household effects to prevent the belongings of the Tulliver family from passing into the hands of strangers at the time of the auction. Mr. Moss, indeed, owed three hundred pounds to Mr. Tulliver but Mr. Tulliver, during a brief interval of consciousness, had expressed his desire that the money should not be demanded from Mr. Moss. Mr. Tulliver also exhorted his son, Tom, never to forgive Wakem but to be always on the look-out for an opportunity for revenge. Mr. Tulliver expressed his deep regret at having brought about the downfall of the family and said that his end was near. However, Mr. Tulliver did not die of this illness though he remained confined to bed for some time.

Tom was only sixteen at this time. A great calamity had descended upon the family. An old playmate of Tom, Bob Jakin by name, turned up unexpectedly and offered some money to Tom. But Tom's pride did not permit him to accept this friendly offer. Days passed. Mr. Tulliver showed signs of improvement. But his mill, his land and other property were now going to be put on sale. Uncle Deane had persuaded his firm Messrs. Guest & Co. to buy Mr. Tulliver's property in which case it would have been possible for Mr. Tulliver to be retained as manager. But owing to a wrong strategy employed

by Mrs. Tulliver, the property was purchased by Mr. Tulliver's enemy Wakem who wanted further to humiliate Mr. Tulliver by offering him the job of the manager of the mill with himself as his employer. This came as another blow to Mr. Tulliver. All the uncles and aunts as well as Mrs. Tulliver thought that Mr. Tulliver should have no objection to serving as manager under Wakem. Under the pressure of his wife and because of her pleadings, Tulliver had to agree to this proposition. It was a very bitter pill for him to swallow. But he realised the truth in his wife's pathetic assertions that he was wholly responsible for reducing the family to a state of pauperism. However, Mr. Tulliver took a promise from his son, Tom, that the latter would never forgive Wakem and would seek revenge. Having considerably improved in health, Mr. Tulliver was now able to attend to business again. He started a new chapter in his life by becoming the manager of the mill with Wakem as his employer. In the meanwhile Tom managed to get a job with the help of his uncle, Mr. Deane, in the firm of Messrs. Guest & Co. of which Mr. Deane was a junior partner. Mr. Tulliver now suffered from a chronic depression. A number of debts had still to be paid and Mr. Tulliver was determined that these debts must be paid off as soon as possible. Tom fully shared his father's view in his respect. Father and son were now saving whatever little they could from their meagre incomes.

Book IV (The Valley of Humiliation) : Maggie's life, like the life of the other members of the family, was now very unhappy. She suffered from a feeling of loneliness and an utter absence of joy. She felt that Tom was indifferent to her. There was a heavy weight upon her mind all the time. However, a book that she read at this time restored her mental equilibrium to some extent. The author of this book, Thomas a Kempis, had urged the need for complete renunciation of self and selfish pleasures. The secret of happiness, the author said, lay in going wholly out of oneself and retaining nothing of self-love. This teaching came as a great illumination for Maggie. This book was a present from Bob who was taking much interest in Tom and who was trying to prove as helpful to the ruined family as he could. The lesson taught by the author

of that book greatly changed Maggie's temper. As days passed, even Maggie's mother noticed the change in her Mrs. Tulliver found that Maggie who was once a "contrairy" child had now become very meek and submissive. Maggie had never been her mother's favourite child but the change in Maggie's behaviour aroused a new affection for her in her mother's heart. Maggie's father, however, felt much distressed at the thought that Maggie, on account of the evil days through which the family was passing, might have to marry a fellow much inferior to her. But there were two other thoughts which occupied Mr. Tulliver's mind most of the time—the thought of paying off the remainder of his debts and the thought of taking revenge upon Wakem.

Book V (Wheat and Tares): Time passed. Maggie was now seventeen and Tom twenty-one. One day, after several years, she met Philip by chance in the course of one of her walks through a place called the Red Deeps. She still cherished sweet memories of Philip's kindness and affection towards her and Tom during Tom's stay with Mr. Stelling. But while Tom was now bitterly hostile to Philip on account of the enmity between Tulliver and Wakem, Maggie still harboured feelings of sympathy towards the deformed boy. A mutual attraction between Maggie and Philip had existed at one time and it was renewed by this meeting. Philip told her that during the last four years or so he had always thought of her. He also said that she had grown into a very beautiful maiden. From this day onwards, Maggie and Philip began to meet secretly in the Red deeps.

Tom was working very hard and saving as much as he could from his small earnings. He was as determined as his father to pay off the debts. Bob Jakin met Tom off and on. Bob was doing quite well as a travelling packman. One day he gave an idea to Tom for making money. The proposition consisted in exporting certain commodities through a sailor friend of Bob. But money was needed for the purchase of those commodities. Tom approached his uncle, Glegg, who advanced him the required money on the understanding that he would have a share in the profits.

Another year passed. The intimacy between Maggie and

Philip had greatly increased. Philip had declared to her his love for her. She also loved him but she told him that, in view of the hostility betweeen their fathers, they must not think of marriage.

A suspicion having arisen in Tom's mind, Tom took the earliest opportunity to ask Maggie whether she had been meeting Philip. He threatened to speak to his father about this matter if Maggie did not confess the whole truth. Maggie felt compelled to make the confession. She told Tom that she and Philip were in love with each other and had been meeting for about a year now. Tom severely rebuked Maggie for the deceit she had been practising upon him and her father. He made Maggie swear upon the Bible that she would not meet Philip again without Tom's permission.

Three more weeks passed. Tom had by this time made enough money from his transactions. This, added to the family savings during the previous four years, was enough to pay off Tulliver's debts. Tulliver was very happy that he would now be able to look everybody in the face. A meeting of Tulliver's creditors was called at an inn in St. Ogg's. Tulliver made a speech in which he praised his son for having saved the honour of the family by earning enough money to pay off the debts. After the meeting, Tulliver mounted his horse and rode homewards. He was in a mood of triumphant joy because all his debts had been paid off and he was a free man. When Tulliver approached the mill he saw Wakem coming on a horse. Wakem, not knowing the changed circumstances of Tulliver, spoke to him roughly and even rebuked him for having neglected some duty. This infuriated Tulliver because it was no longer possible for him to bear a rebuke from Wakem whom he had always regarded as a rascal and a rogue. He spurred his horse and made a rush towards Wakem. Wakem's horse, staggering backward, threw its rider from the saddle down on the ground. Before Wakem could rise, Tulliver jumped down from his horse and rushing on Wakem began to flog him fiercely with his riding whip. Wakem screamed for help. Maggie came running and caught hold of her father. Wakem rode away after threatening severe action against Tulliver. The excitement of this assault upon wakem proved too much for

Tulliver in his delicate state of health and he did not survive it. He died mumbling that this world had proved too much for him and that the world was no place for an honest man. Tom and Maggie clung to each other and wept together.

Book VI (The Great Temptation) : Two more years rolled by. Maggie had got a job in a school after her father's death. Tom was living as a lodger in the house of his friend Bob Jakin who was now a married man and the father of a child. Maggie received an invitation from her cousin Lucy Deane to come and spend a few days with her. Maggie's mother was already living there. When Lucy's mother had fallen ill, Maggie's mother had attended upon her. But Lucy's mother had died and since then Maggie's mother had been keeping house for Mr. Dean and his daughter Lucy. Maggie accepted Lucy's invitation and came to stay with her.

Lucy was being courted by Stephen, a handsome young man and the son of the senior partner of Messrs. Guest & Co. of which Lucy's father was a junior partner. Stephen was a good singer. He was visiting Lucy's house daily and it was generally believed that he would marry her. Philip Wakem also visited Lucy sometimes. Stephen and Philip were friends. Philip was also a good singer. Often Stephen and Philip met at Lucy's house and then they used to beguile themselves by singing together. Maggie's arrival made Lucy very happy but when Maggie learnt that Philip was a visitor at the house she said that she could not meet him without obtaining her brother's permission because of the pledge that she had given to him. Maggie told Lucy the whole story of her love for Philip and Philip's love for her and of how the whole affair had ended because of Tom's determined opposition. After hearing the story, Lucy insisted that Maggie should meet Philip. Accordingly, Maggie went to Tom's lodgings in order to get his permission. Tom reluctantly gave her the permission but made it clear that if Maggie wanted Philip as a lover she would have to give up her brother altogether.

Lucy had introduced Maggie to Stephen. Stephen was fascinated by the beauty and graces of Maggie. He took the two cousins to the river for a row. There he got an opportunity to hold Maggie for a few moments when she slipped in

the boat. That evening Maggie also experienced certain new emotions. Stephen seemed to have come from a world that was made up of love, beauty and delight. Stephen had looked at her admiringly and she had enjoyed his admiration. Philip had gone away on a sketching expedition and returned after about twelve days. Therefore the proposed meeting between Philip and Maggie did not materialise all these days. During these days Stephen had been paying more and more attentions to Maggie. Lucy did not have the least suspicion that Stephen had fallen deeply in love with Maggie and that Maggie responded to that love. When Philip did turn up at Lucy's house, Maggie met him cordially and told him that she had obtained her brother's permission to meet him. But Philip perceived the attraction that had sprung up between Maggie and Stephen. This made him very jealous.

Tom had now served the firm of Messrs. Guest & Co. for seven years. Both Mr. Guest and Mr. Deane were pleased with his work. On one or two occasions Tom had, indeed, done a conspicuous service to the firm. His employers now recognized his worth and offered him a share in the business. Tom felt very grateful but there was something else he very much wanted his employers to do. Tom wanted to fulfil the last wish of his father. Accordingly, he suggested to Mr. Deane that the firm should buy Dorlcote Mill from Wakem. Mr. Deane promised to do something about it. It was Tom's hope that at some future date it might become possible for him to buy the mill in his own name.

Now Lucy played a part to bring about the sale of Dorlcote Mill by Wakem to Messrs. Guest & Co. She talked to Philip privately and explained why it was necessary that Philip's father should agree to sell the mill to Messrs. Guest & Co. Philip weighed the whole situation and came to the conclusion that if he could bring about the sale, his position in relation to Tom and Maggie would improve and that at least one obstacle between him and the Tulliver family would be removed. So he talked to his father about it. He confessed that he had been meeting Maggie secretly in the Red Deeps and that he was in love with her. He also said that it was quite likely for Maggie to agree to marry him. At first Wakem was furious that his

son should be thinking in terms of marrying the daughter of a man who had assaulted him and had bee↑ his sworn enemy. But on thinking the matter over, Wakem softened. He admitted that Maggie had qualities and he told his son that he would be willing to sell the mill and also to accept Maggie as his daughter-in-law. Philip felt delighted and communicated to Mr. Deane and to Lucy his father's willingness to sell the property.

In the meanwhile, the attraction between Stephen and Maggie was increasing. One day Stephen visited Lucy's house at a time when Lucy was not there. He paid this visit in order to have some time alone with Maggie. They had a little walk in the garden. Stephen offered his arm to Maggie and she took it. A little later she repented of having given this encouragement to Stephen. Stephen also felt that he was doing a wrong to Lucy but he could not subdue his feelings towards Maggie. Some days later, a charity bazaar was organised by Mrs. Kenn, the wife of the Vicar of St. Ogg's. Maggie was in charge of one of the stalls. Stephen and Philip also visited the bazaar. Stephen was now more than ever in love with Maggie but he successfully concealed his feelings from Lucy. Stephen managed to have a few moments alone with Maggie at her stall. Maggie had fallen under the spell of Stephen but she was trying her utmost to conquer her feelings in order to keep her conscience clear as everybody was under the impression that Stephen was going to marry Lucy. If Maggie were to marry Stephen, she would have a life of comfort and luxury after her past years of wretchedness and misery. But she could not forget Lucy's claim upon Stephen nor did she wish to hurt the feelings of Philip who loved her deeply and for whom she still had a soft corner in her heart. She told Lucy that she loved Philip but that she could not give up Tom even for the sake of Philip.

A few day after the bazaar was ended, Maggie and Stephen met at a dance arranged by the Guest family. Stephen found an opportunity to take Maggie out of the dance hall. They walked about together arm in arm. Suddenly Stephen started showering kissess upon Maggie's wrist. Maggie was in love with Stephen but she rebuked him far taking this liberty because

she realized that she should not be treacherous to Lucy. Next morning Philip came to see her. She told him that she loved him and would have liked to marry him but that she could not divide herself from her brother.

Maggie now went to stay for a few days with her aunt Mrs. Moss. Stephen paid her an unexpected visit there and told her that he was madly in love with her. Maggie explained that she could not be false to Lucy and that besides, she had given a word to Philip that if she married at all she would marry Philip. Before Stephen went away from her on this occasion she permitted him to kiss her.

A change in the fortunes of the Tulliver family now took place. Dorlcote Mill was bought by Messrs. Guest & Co., and Tom and his mother moved to their old house. Maggie decided to take up a job so as to lead an independent life. Lucy discussed with Tom the possibility of Maggie's marrying Philip. But Tom made it clear that, if Maggie married Philip, he would have nothing to do with her for the rest of his life.

Maggie was now sullen and glum most of the time. Her sense of honour compelled her to give up Stephen whom she really wanted to marry. Indeed, a fierce battle of emotions went on in Maggie's heart. There were moments when she thought that she must look to her own happiness and not take into account the feelings of Lucy or Philip. But the voice of her conscience warned her that she would be committing an act of treachery and breach of trust if she married Stephen.

A few days later, Stephen and Maggie went for boating. Maggie did not really wish to go with Stephen without Lucy. But Stephen pleaded with her so strongly that she went with him. Stephen rowed while Maggie was lost in her own thoughts. They were to get down from the boat at a village a few miles down the river. But Maggie sat in the boat so absent mindedly that she did not realize that their destination had already passed and that they were several miles beyond the village. On realizing that Stephen had brought her a long way beyond the village, she began to sob in an agony at the thought of what Lucy would feel. Stephen caught hold of her hands and said that they should never go back again till they were married.

Stephen spoke with such a deep and earnest feeling that Maggie found it impossible to say "no" to him. They got into a Dutch vessel sailing to Mudport. The journey to Mudport took them two days. But by the time they reached there, Maggie had changed her mind. She did not wish to destroy the trust and hopes of Lucy and Philip. She felt that if she married Stephen, she would for ever afterwards be haunted by a sense of degradation and a feeling of guilt. Stephen persisted in arguing with her, saying that he did not love Lucy any more and that she did not love Philip any more, and that for this reason it would be sheer folly for them to separate from each other. But Maggie replied that while she did love Stephen and wanted to marry him, she could never be happy with him on account of an ever-haunting feeling of repentance and guilt that would follow.

Book VII (The Final Rescue) : It was only on the fifth day that Maggie returned to St. Ogg's. Stephen did not come with her. She had rejected the golden opportunity of marrying Stephen. She now went straight to her brother Tom. But her brother refused to allow her entry into the house because she had disgraced the family name by running away with cousin Lucy's fiance and then returning without getting married. Her mother, however, took a lenient view of Maggie's conduct. Maggie, then, accompanied by her mother, went to Bob Jakin's house who offered them lodgings. The people of St. Ogg's now had nothing but contempt for Maggie because of her disgraceful conduct in having run away with a man who was engaged to her cousin Lucy. Besides, she had come back without marrying him after passing two or three days alone with him. Meanwhile, Lucy lay seriously ill because of the shock that she had received on learning about the elopement of Stephen and Maggie. Maggie was extremely unhappy because she had caused indescribable grief to Lucy and to Philip, besides losing her brother's love and incurring social censure. In the midst of this misery Dr. Kenn, the vicar of St. Ogg's, Bob Jakin, aunt Glegg and Maggie's mother still stood by her and helped her. In the meantime, Stephen had written a letter to his father explaining the circumstances in which the elopement had taken place and completely exonerating Maggie of any responsibility whatsover in the matter. This

letter greatly helped towards a reconciliation between Maggie and Lucy. With this reconciliation, a great weight was lifted off Maggie's heart.

Stephen wrote a letter to Maggie also, pleading with her not to forsake him. He said that it was still possible for them to get married and thus to save themselves from wrecking their lives. The letter, which was written in a tone of passionate entreaty, revived the conflict in Maggie's mind. There was still a chance for her to make herself happy in life. But once again her sense of duty to Lucy and to Philip returned with an even greater intensity. The conflict between accepting Stephen's offer and the voice of her conscience was very agonizing but it ended with Maggie holding Stephen's letter to the candle and letting it burn. As she sat in her room in Bob Jakin's house thinking that the path of renunciation and self-sacrifice would be best for her, she suddenly felt a cold sensation about her feet and knees. It was water flowing into the room. She at once realized that it was the flood. It had been raining heavily for many days and the possibility of a flood had been talked about in the town. Now the flood had come. A couple of boats which were moored at the bank of the river had been driven by the flood close to Bob Jakin's house. One deminating thought in Maggie's mind at this time was the danger that threatened her brother and mother at their house near Dorlcote Mill. She quickly got into one of the boats and rowed towards the house where she was born and where she had spent her childhood. Her sole anxiety now was to rescue her brother and mother. All her old love of her brother had risen in her heart and she looked forward to a new understanding with him. She succeeded in rowing close to the house and shouted to Tom. The level of the water had risen so high that Maggie's boat was on level with the upper windows of the house. Tom was surprised to see Maggie in a boat. He told her that their mo had gone to Garum Firs a couple of days earlier. Tom got into the boat and began to row. Brother and sister kept looking at each other silently. All the love of their younger days was re-awakened with all its depth ; and all misunderstanding had been swept away. Just then they saw huge pieces of wooden machinery floating towards them on the flood at a great speed.

They realized that it was not possible for them to get their boat out of the way of those masses. They knew that their end had come. They clasped each other in a mutual embrace and got ready to die. The next moment, the boat was no longer visible upon the water. Brother and sister had gone down into the water in an embrace, never to be parted.

Five years passed. Every man and woman mentioned in this story was alive, except Tom and Maggie. Close to the grave of Mr. Tulliver a tomb had been erected for the burial of the bodies of Tom and Maggie, which had been recovered after the flood and had been found in a close embrace. On the tomb were inscribed the names of Tom and Maggie Tulliver and below the names the following words: "In their death they were not divided." Stephen at last married Lucy and they both sometimes visited the tomb to pay their homage to Maggie. Philip was now always solitary. He spent much of his time among the trees of the Red Deeps where he had spent the golden moments of his life in the company of Maggie.

II. THE STORY IN BRIEF

The **Mill On The Floss** is the story of the vicissitudes in the lives of Maggie and Tom from childhood onwards. Maggie and Tom were the children of Mr. and Mrs. Tulliver who owned a flour mill called Dorlcote Mill which stood on the banks of the river Floss. At the time the story begins, Maggie was nine years old and Tom was four years older. Mr. Tulliver was very fond of Maggie while Mrs. Tulliver was more fond of the boy. Maggie was deeply attached to her brother. Tom also loved his sister but he sometimes felt irritated by, and annoyed with, her. Whenever Tom felt angry with Maggie, Maggie suffered deeply and often cried in her grief. Tom and Maggie had a cousin, a girl called Lucy, who was of the same age as Maggie and who was thought to be much better-behaved than Maggie.

Tom was sent to King's Lorton to be educated by Rev. Walter Stelling, while Maggie was sent for her education to Miss Firnis's boarding house. Tom was rather slow at learning. In his second term at school, he found a companion. This was a hunch-backed boy called Philip, the son of the lawyer Wakem. The relations between Tulliver and Wakem were very hostile.

Tom did not therefore, develop much intimacy with Philip. In the course of a visit to Tom, Maggie also happened to meet Philip. Maggie and Philip felt drawn towards each other.

During his last quarter at school, Tom's studies were interrupted on account of a family disaster. Mr. Tulliver had lost a law suit against Mr. Pivart. He had been engaged in this law suit for several months. He had incurred heavy expenses in this litigation. The lawyer Wakem had fought this case on behalf of Mr. Tulliver's opponent. Losing the law suit meant that all the property of Tulliver would be sold out because Mr. Tulliver had no cash and because his land and household effects were already under mortgage. As a result of the shock of this misfortune, Mr. Tullliver was struck by paralysis. Tom left school and returned home.

Tom and Maggie had several uncles and aunts in prosperous circumstances. But none of them did anything to relieve the distress of the Tulliver family. Tom was only sixteen at this time. The entire furniture and other house-hold effects of the Tulliver family were auctioned. The mill was also sold. It was bought by the lawyer, Wakem. Wakem's purchase of the mill was another heavy blow to Tulliver who had now improved somewhat from his illness. Under the pressure of his wife and other relations, Tulliver felt compelled to agree to serve as manager of the mill under Wakem. Tulliver thought it a degradation to serve under Wakem but there was no other way for him to earn a living for the family. However, Tulliver took a promise from his son Tom that the latter would never forgive Wakem and would always be on the look-out for revenge. Tom managed to get a job in a firm called Messrs. Guest & Co. in which his uncle Deane was a junior partner.

Time passed. Maggie was now seventeen and Tom twenty-one. One day, Maggie met Philip by chance in the Red Deeps. Their old affection for each other was revived. They now began to meet secretly in the Red Deeps. The intimacy between them greatly increased. Philip told her that he loved her deeply. She also loved him but she said that, in view of the hostility between their fathers, they must not think of marriage. Their secret meetings came to the knowledge of Tom who severely rebuked Maggie for deceiving her family. He made

her swear upon the Bible that she would not meet Philip again without Tom's permission.

Tom had been working very hard ever since he had got a job. His father and he were determined to pay off the remainder of their debts. After four years of hard work, and with the help of Bob Jakin, Tom had made enough money to pay off the debts. It was a proud day for Tulliver when he found himself a free man again. But Tulliver's hatred for his enemy Wakem had remained absolutely undiminished. In a furious mood he assaulted Wakem and horse-whipped him. The excitement of this assault upon Wakem proved too much for Tulliver and he died of it.

Two more years rolled by. Maggie had been working in a school during these two years. Her cousin Lucy invited her to come and stay with her. Maggie's mother was already living in Lucy's house. Lucy's own mother had died. Maggie accepted the invitation and came to stay with Lucy. Lucy was being courted by Stephen who was the son of the senior partner of Messrs. Guest & Co. of which Lucy's father, Mr. Deane, was a junior partner. Stephen was a daily visitor at Lucy's house. Philip also used to visit Lucy's house sometimes. When Maggie was introduced to Stephen, Stephen was fascinated by her beauty and her graces. Maggie was also greatly attracted by Stephen. Stephen began to pay attentions to Maggie. Maggie half accepted and half rejected his advances. She did not wish to rob her dear cousin Lucy of the man to whom Lucy was engaged to married. But Stephen persisted in his advances. There was now a great conflict in the mind of Maggie. She had certainly fallen in love with Stephen but there were two hurdles in the way of marrying Stephen. Firstly, Stephen was almost engaged to Lucy, and Maggie did not want to do anything to hurt Lucy. Secondly, Maggie had in the past loved Philip and even now had a soft corner for him. Her marrying Stephen would, therefore, break the heart of both Lucy and Philip.

This position continued for some time. In the meanwhile, Tom's services had been greatly appreciated by his employers who now offered him a share in the business. Tom urged Messrs. Guest & Co. to try to buy Darlcote Mill from the

lawyer Wakem. If the mill were bought by Messrs. Guest & Co., Tom and his mother could live in the old house and, at some future date, it might become possible for Tom to buy the mill in his own name and thus fulfil his father's dying wish. Lucy played a part to bring about the sale of Dorlcote Mill by Wakem to Messrs. Guest & Co. She talked to Philip privately and explained why it was necessary that Philip's father should agree to sell the mill to Messrs. Guest & Co. Philip weighed the whole situation and came to the conclusion that, if he could bring about the sale, his position in relation to Tom and Maggie would improve and that at least one obstacle between him and the Tulliver family would be removed. So he talked to his father about it. He confessed that he had been meeting Maggie secretly in the Red Deeps and that he was still deeply in love with her. He also said that it was quite likely for Maggie to agree to marry him. At first Wakem was furious that his son should be thinking in terms of marrying the daughter of a man who had assulted him and had been his sworn enemy. But on thinking the matter over, Wakem softened. He told his son that he would be willing to sell the mill and also accept Maggie as his daughter-in-law. Accordingly, the mill passed into the hands of Messrs. Guest & Co., and Tom and her mother moved to the old house where the Tulliver family had lived before.

Maggie's emotional life continued to be very unhappy. Her sense of honour compelled her to give up Stephen whom she really wanted to marry. There were moments when she thought that she must look to her own happiness and not take into account the feelings of Lucy and Philip. But the voice of her conscience warned her that she would be committing an act of treachery and breach of trust if she married Stephen. Lucy discussed with Tom the prospects of Maggie's marrying Philip. But Tom made it clear that if Maggie married Philip he would have nothing to do with her for the rest of his life.

One day Stephen took Maggie for boating on the river Without Maggie's realising what was happening, he continued to row the boat till it had gone several miles beyond the point where they should have got down from the boat in order to return to St. Ogg's. Stephen now began to plead his love for

Maggie. He almost prevailed upon her to agree to marry him. From the boat they got into a Dutch vessel sailing to Mudport. The journey took them two days. But by the time they reached there, Maggie had changed her mind. She told Stephen that she did love him and wanted to marry him but that she would never be happy with him on account of an ever-haunting feeling of guilt. She explained that she could not be false either to Lucy or to Philip.

It was only on the fifth day that Maggie returned to St. Ogg's. Stephen did not come with her. She had rejected the golden oppportunity of marrying Stephen. She now went straight to her brother Tom. But her brother refused her entry into the house because she had disgraced the family name by running away with cousin Lucy's fiance and then returning without getting married. Maggie took up lodgings in Bob Jakin's house. The people of St. Ogg's had now nothing but contempt for Maggie because of her disgraceful conduct in having run away with a man who was engaged to her cousin Lucy. Meanwhile, Stephen had written a letter to his father explaining the circumstances in which Maggie had gone with him and completely exonerating Maggie of any blame in the matter. Lucy who had suffered a great shock on account of Stephen's desertion became reconciled to Maggie on learning that Maggie was not in the least to blame.

Stephen made one more attempt to win Maggie. He wrote her a letter appealing to her not to forsake him. The letter revived the conflict in Maggie's mind. There was still a chance for her to make herself happy in life. But once again her sense of duty to Lucy and to Philip returned with an even greater intensity. She decided to choose the path of self-sacrifice and renunciation. She made up her mind not to marry Stephen. But, as she sat in her room in Bob Jakin's house, she felt water flowing into the room. It was the flood, the danger of which had been talked about in the town during the past several days on account of the heavy rainfall that was taking place. Maggie now thought of the danger that threatened her brother and mother at the house near Dorlcote Mill. She managed to get into a boat and rowed towards her brother's house. All her old love of her brother had risen in her heart and she looked

forward to a new understanding with him. She succeeded in rowing close to the house and shouted to Tom. Tom was surprised to see Maggie in a boat. He told her that their mother had gone to Garum Firs a couple of days earlier. He got into the boat and began to row. Brother and sister kept looking at each other silently. All the love of their younger days was reawakened with all its depth. But suddenly a new danger threatened them. They saw huge pieces of wooden machinery floating towards them on the flood at a great speed. It was not possible for them to get the boat out of the way of those huge masses. They realized that their end had come. They clasped each other in a mutual embrace and got ready to die. The next instant the boat was no longer visible upon the water. Brother and sister had gone down into the water in an embrace never to be parted. After the flood had subsided, their bodies, still locked in a mutual embrace, were recovered and buried together in the same grave. On their tomb the following words were inscribed : "In their death they were not divided". After a few years Stephen, at last, married Lucy but Philip remained solitary.

III. Main Incidents and Episodes in the Novel.

(i) Tom's School-Life *Or*, Tom at Mr. Stelling's

Tom's difficulties with Latin and with geometrical demonstrations : During the first quarter, Tom was very unhappy at King's Lorton where he had been put under the charge of Rev. Walter Stelling for education. Tom found a great difficulty in understanding geometrical demonstrations and the complexities of Latin grammar. Mr. Stelling's educational theory was that the classics and geometry were the very basis for the culture of the mind. Therefore he worked hard at instilling these subjects into Tom's mind. But to Tom, conjugations and declensions of Latin grammar were a torment. Tom could predict with accuracy what number of horses were cantering behind him ; he could throw a stone right into the centre of a given ripple ; he could guess to a fraction how many lengths of his stick it would take to reach across the playground ; he could draw almost perfect squares on his slate without any measurement. But Tom's faculties failed him before the abstractions of Latin grammar ;

nor could he understand the complicated problems of Euclid's geometry. Tom considered all this a "bore" and "beastly stuff." Tom's shyness added to his misery. Mr. Stelling was quite severe with Tom about his lessons and he soon came to the conclusion that Tom was a thoroughly stupid boy because he did not show much intelligence in the understanding of abstract things. Mr. Stelling also felt that Tom was obstinately indifferent toward his studies. The actual fact was that Tom's brain was not very receptive to etymology, geometrical demonstrations and things of that kind.

The duty of looking after Laura : Apart from his studies, Tom had to look after the little daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Stelling. She was a small girl by the name of Laura. There was a nurse in the house but she was most of the time occupied with Mr. and Mrs. Stelling's second baby. The duty of looking after the first child, therefore, fell to the lot of Tom because Mr. and Mrs. Stelling could not afford a second nurse. Tom soon began to hate Mrs. Stelling but towards Laura he was quite affectionate.

Maggie's first visit to Tom and her stay there for a fortnight : Before Tom's first half year with Mr. Stelling ended, Maggie came to see him. She stayed in Mr. Stelling's house for a fortnight. Maggie was quite impressed by the learned books that Tom had to read. Looking through the Latin grammar, Maggie claimed that she could learn it very soon. But she found that Tom had not made much progress in this respect. Maggie's stay for a fortnight proved to be a great comfort to Tom. He missed her greatly when she was gone. At last the dreary half year at school ended and Tom returned home for the Christmas holidays. During this half year, Mr. Stelling had only Tom as his pupil.

Tom and Philip : After the holidays when Tom went back to school at King's Lorton, he found a companion. This was a hunch-backed boy called Philip. Philip was the son of the lawyer, Wakem. At first, Tom tried to remain aloof from Philip because Philip was the son of his father's enemy. But soon they became quite friendly. Tom wondered whether there was any relation between the deformity of Wakem's son and the rascality of Wakem. Philip seemed to know a lot more

than Tom did. He had already finished his course of Latin grammar and mathematics and Greek. He could tell wonderful fighting stories. He also knew how to draw. Tom received much help from Philip in his studies. During this second half year, Tom showed a lot of all-round improvement.

A quarrel between Tom and Philip, and Maggie's second visit : The smooth relations between Tom and Philip were interrupted by a quarrel over a trifling matter. Both used unpleasant words but Tom's language was very insulting. Tom said that while he was an honest man's son, Philip was the son of a rascal. They had had quarrels before also but this one seemed difficult to make up. Then Maggie came on another visit to her brother. Maggie thought Philip a nice boy. She told Tom that it was not Philip's fault that he was the son of a wicked father.

Tom hurt himself with a sword : Tom had borrowed a sword from the village school master. He had hidden the sword under the bed. He was very keen to show the sword to Maggie. He drew the sword from the sheath and indulged in a bit of sword-play, with the result that he injured himself in the foot rather badly. He was now confined to bed. Maggie looked after him and nursed him. Sometimes Philip would come in and Tom would ask him to relate a story. Maggie was also greatly interested in Philip's stories. Before Maggie left home, she had become quite attached to Philip and Philip had become very fond of her. She had even given him a kiss. But Tom and Philip never became close friends. Tom thought of Philip as a queer fellow, a hump-back and the son of a rogue.

The fifth half year and Tom's return home on account of a family disaster : So Tom went on to the fifth half year. He was now sixteen. His school course went on with a mill-like monotony. By the time he reached his last quarter at school he had grown into a tall youth bearing himself without the least awkwardness and talking without any shyness. Philip had already left school. Before Tom could complete his last quarter, he received the news that his father had lost the law suit against Pivart and was stricken by paralysis. On hearing this news, Tom immediately returned home and had to discontinue his studies.

(*ii*) The Relations of Tom and Maggie

Maggie's attachment to Tom during childhood. Maggie had been very fond of Tom from her very childhood. She had loved him, doted upon him and treated him as the centre of her affections. Tom too loved his sister when he was a boy but his love was not so intense as Maggie's love for him. The slightest indifference on the part of Tom used to hurt the feelings of Maggie. She used to sob and weep in the attic if Tom in any way seemed not to care for her. When Tom was to return from the academy, Maggie had waited for him with great eagerness. The slightest show of affection from Tom used to fill her heart with great delight. Tom would sometimes rebuke her and then she used to feel most wretched and miserable. The fact was that she was much more sentimental and emotional than Tom. Sometimes she spoke to Tom as if she had a superior intelligence. This would irritate Tom.

Maggie's secret meetings with Philip and the fury of Tom. The real trouble began when it was found that Maggie had been meeting Philip secretly in the Red Deeps. Tom shared his father's fierce hatred toward the Wakem family. Maggie was of the opinion that the sins of parents should not be visited upon the children and that if Wakem had done any wrong to the Tulliver family it did not follow that she should hate Wakem's son. When the secret meetings of Maggie and Philip became known to Tom, Tom was indignant and furious. He severely rebuked Maggie and made her swear on the Bible that she would not meet Philip again without Tom's permission. In view of Maggie's conduct, Tom now had a notion that Maggie was not a reliable girl. This forced separation from Philip made Maggie more miserable than ever, because Philip was the only person who had shown her the affection which her nature craved for. In obedience to Tom's wishes, she kept away from Philip.

Tom's alienation from Maggie as a result of Maggie's elopement with Stephen : After a few years, chance again brought Maggie into contact with Philip. But this time she obtained Tom's permission to meet Philip. Tom was very reluctant in giving this permission. He had a feeling that

Maggie's old love for Philip would be revived. Tom could never tolerate the prospect of his sister marrying Philip. So, while he gave Maggie his permission to meet Philip, he warned her not to become too intimate with the man and not to entertain any silly notions of marrying him. Maggie still retained her old love for Philip but now this feeling was pushed into the background by Stephen's forcing himself upon her. She fell under Stephen's spell and, in a fit of absent-mindedness, eloped with him. Tom was deeply hurt by Maggie's conduct, because Maggie had disgraced the family name by running away with a man who was betrothed to her cousin Lucy. But he felt even more insulted and grief-stricken when Maggie came back on the fifth day without having married Stephen. Tom suspected the worst. He, therefore, refused to have anything to do with Maggie. He did not permit her even to enter his house. Thus a complete alienation between brother and sister took place. Tom had never been able to understand Maggie's real nature or to appreciate Maggie's sincere devotion to him.

The final reconciliation : Maggie's affection for Tom remained undiminished by these events. She was unhappy for various reasons and Tom's attitude towards her made her even more unhappy. When the flood came, her most dominating feeling was that Tom must be rescued. At great personal risk she rowed a boat to the house where Tom lived. In this crisis, Tom also, overwhelmed by Maggie's love for him, forgot all his bitterness against Maggie. This was the final reconciliation. But they did not survive this reconciliation. The boat sank into the water and brother and sister, clasped in each other's embrace, were drowned and, as the authoress says at the end, "in their death they were not divided."

(*iii*) Tulliver's Feud with Wakem and its Consequences :

Tulliver was the owner of Dorlocote Mill while Wakem was a lawyer. Tulliver got into a dispute with Dix about water. Wakem acted as Dix's lawyer in the dispute. In the arbitration that followed, Tulliver won the case but he began to hate Wakem like poison. He looked upon Wakem as a rascal and a rogue. In fact, Tulliver began to hate the whole

class of lawyers whom he regarded as the product of the devil.

Shortly afterwards, Tulliver got entangled in another dispute about water, this time with a man called Pivart. Pivart had bought some land up the river Floss and was now taking measures to irrigate the land. This meant a diversion of the water and an infringement upon Tulliver's legitimate claim to water power. Finding that Pivart would not yield and feeling convinced of the justice of his own case, Tulliver filed a suit against Pivart. Mrs. Tulliver urged her husband not to enter into litigation but that only stiffened him in his purpose. This time, again, Wakem was the lawyer of the opposite party. The law suit went on for some time and at the end Tulliver lost it. Tulliver now hated Wakem more fiercely than before. The consequences of losing the law suit were disastrous for the Tulliver family. Tulliver learnt that Mr. Furley with whom he had mortgaged his freehold land had transferred the mortgage to Wakem. Tulliver's household effects were already mortgaged on a bill of sale. The expenses of the law suit proved to be very heavy. Tulliver, in a frenzy of grief, fell down from his horse and was stricken by paralysis. He lay in bed, without being able to recognize anybody except Maggie. When he recovered somewhat, he learnt that his household effects were going to be auctioned and that the rest of his property would also be sold away. He had been reduced to a state of bankruptcy. To make matters worse, the mill was purchased by Wakem himself. Wakem offered the job of the manager of the mill to Tulliver. This was the bitterest humiliation for Tulliver. There was no choice for Tulliver but to act as the manager of the mill as an employee of Wakem. But Tulliver did not forgive Wakem and continued to harbour fierce hatred for him.

In spite of Tulliver's property having been sold away, all the debts had not been paid off. The one anxiety of Tulliver now was to pay off his debts and thus regain the good name that he had lost. The very mention of Wakem would now infuriate him. Indeed, Wakem's name became anathema to him. He made his son, Tom, swear on the Bible that he would take revenge upon Wakem. Tom, too, to a large extent, shared his

father's feelings towards the Wakem family. That was the reason why Tom could not tolerate his sister's secret meetings with Philip. He severely rebuked Maggie for getting sentimentally involved with Philip.

Tulliver was now saving every penny that he could from his meagre income. Tom also got a job and was contributing somewhat towards the family savings. At the end of four years or so, chiefly as a result of a little export business that Tom had been doing under the advice of his friend Bob Jakin, it became possible for Tulliver to pay off all his debts. It was a proud day both for Tulliver and his son. But this feeling of triumph intoxicated Tulliver to such an extent that, on meeting Wakem, he assaulted his enemy. He seized Wakem and flogged him fiercely with his riding-whip. The excitement of this assault upon Wakem proved too much for Tulliver in his delicate state of health. He fell seriously ill and died soon after, mumbling that this world had proved too much for him and that the world was no place for an honest man like him.

(*iv*) Maggie's love-affair with Philip

Philip and Maggie met at King's Lorton: Philip was the son of a lawyer, Wakem, for whom, Tulliver, Maggie's father, had a bitter hatred. Maggie first met Philip at King's Lorton where Philip and Tom were studying under the direction of Rev. Stelling. Maggie was on a visit to Tom and it was there that she made the acquaintance of Philip. Tom, knowing the hostility between his own father and Philip's father, had been trying not to become very intimate with Philip. All the same, Tom received much help from Philip in his studies. When Tom injured himself with a sword and was confined to bed, Maggie looked after him and nursed him. Sometimes Philip would also come to enquire about Tom's health and Tom would ask him to relate a story because Philip could tell wonderful fighting stories. Maggie also got interested in Philip's stories. Before Maggie left for home she had become quite attached to Philip and Philip had become very fond of her. She had even given him a kiss. Maggie was attracted towards Philip by Philip's artistic tastes and intellectual interests. She also felt grateful to him for the way in which he had behaved towards

Tom when Tom had injured himself and was confined to bed. There was also an element of sympathy in her attachment to Philip because Philip was a hump-back.

A few years later : It was several years later that Maggie and Philip met again. Maggie was now seventeen. Philip had not forgotten her nor had she forgotten him. She cherished sweet memories of Philip's kindness and affection towards her and Tom during Tom's school days. Tom was now more than ever hostile to Philip on account of the bitter antagonism between their fathers and the disaster that had overtaken the Tulliver family as a result of that antagonism. But Maggie still harboured a feeling of sympathy for, and gratitude towards, the deformed boy. Philip told her that during the last four years or so he had always thought of her. He also said that she had grown into a very beautiful maiden. Maggie told him that it would not be right for them to meet again because of the enmity between their fathers. But Philip insisted that she should permit him to meet her occasionally because he was lonely and friendless. Actually Maggie also wanted that they should meet because she too was lonely and friendless and Tom had become indifferent to her. But she knew her father's relentless hatred of Wakem and she knew that her father would never tolerate her meeting Wakem's son. Still Philip insisted and she replied that they might meet occasionally though she would not like to make definite appointments with him. Indeed, there was a conflict in Maggie's mind whether to obey her own feelings and keep meeting Philip or to respect her father's wishes and break off all connections with Philip.

Secret meetings : A year passed. Philip and Maggie had been meeting secretly in a thicket called the Red Deeps. They became quite intimate during this period. Philip would sometimes lend her a book which he thought she ought to read. Maggie found great happiness in Philip's company. But at the same time she felt guilty about these meetings. Philip was becoming more and more devoted to her. In fact he was over head and ears in love with her. Maggie on her side wanted to keep the whole thing at a brother-sister level because any other relationship seemed to her impossible in view of her father's feelings towards the Wakem family. One day Philip declared

his love for her. She said that she cared for him more than for anyone else but that they must not think of marriage. She even kissed him at his request. She knew that she was in love with him. But she also realized the dangerous consequences of this love-affair.

Tom's indignation : Lovers' secret meetings cannot remain secret for ever. Tom came to know of the secret meetings of Maggie and Philip. He was furious. He severely rebuked Maggie for the deceit she had been practising upon him and upon her father. He made Maggie swear on the Bible that she would not meet Philip again without Tom's permission. He allowed her to meet Philip for the last time in his own presence. At this meeting Tom used bad language towards Philip for having tried to lure Maggie. He ridiculed Philip in his role of a lover for a fine girl like Maggie and taunted Philip on his deformed body.

In two minds : Two more years rolled by. Maggie went to stay with her cousin Lucy for some time. Philip was a frequent visitor at Lucy's house. It was now inevitable that Maggie should meet Philip in Lucy's house. Maggie sought Tom's permission to meet Philip and Tom reluctantly agreed but at the same time warned her that if she allowed Philip to make love to her, he would have nothing to do with her for the rest of his life. When at last she met Philip, she found that Philip was as much in love with her as ever. But now she had got another admirer also. This was Stephen who was actually Lucy's lover hut who had now fallen in love with Maggie. Philip, with great difficulty, obtained his father's permission to marry Maggie but by now Stephen had cast a spell upon Maggie. She tried to avoid the temptation but Stephen pursued her persistently. Philip was stung by jealousy to see the mutual attraction between Maggie and Stephen. It came as a shock to everybody when Maggie ran away with Stephen. But after four or five days she returned without having married Stephen. She had succeeded in fighting the temptation and had obeyed the voice of her conscience. She had realized that her marriage with Stephen would be a great blow to both Lucy and Philip. Philip now wrote a letter to

her, appreciating her decision not to marry Stephen and asserting the constancy of his own love for her. What course Maggie's love for Philip would have taken is only a matter of guess. Fate had already decided to cut short her life on earth. After Maggie's death, Philip felt very solitary and would pass much of his time among the trees of the Red Deeps where he had spent the golden moments of his life in the company of Maggie.

The light which Maggie's affair with Philip throws upon her character : Maggie's love affair with Philip reveals several aspects of her nature. Her attachment to Philip was to a certain extent founded upon her sympathy for that deformed boy. Maggie had a very sympathetic nature. She herself needed sympathy and she had received it from no one but Philip. Her soul hungered for affection and having been denied this affection by Tom she inevitably felt attracted towards Philip who gave her all the affection she needed. Besides, she shared Philip's literary and artistic interests and found a temperamental affinity with him. We also learn from this love-affair that Maggie subordinated her personal feelings to the feelings of her family. She really wanted to marry Philip but Tom's relentless attitude in the matter forced her to give up this idea. We must also realise that her relations with Philip, in spite of her secret meetings with him in the Red Deeps, continued to be perfectly honourable. She had a passionate nature but she did not lose her maidenly virtue. Finally, we find that, in spite of her deep love for Philip, there was room in her heart for another man's love. She fell under the spell of Stephen and she pushed her love for Philip into the background, although ultimately she realised the wrong that she was doing to Philip (and to Lucy), and decided to give up Stephen.

(*v*) Maggie's Love-affair with Stephen

The first meeting and love at first sight : Maggie first met Stephen at her cousin Lucy's house. Stephen was the son of the senior partner of Messrs. Guest & Co. of which her uncle Deane was a junior partner. Thus Stephen belonged to the upper circle of society in St. Ogg's while Maggie herself came of a middle class family which had fallen upon evil days. Stephen had been paying court to Lucy and it was evident

to everybody that they would soon get married. But when Stephen met Maggie, he fell in love with her at first sight. Maggie realised the need of maintaining a kind of indifference towards this new admirer for the simple reason that he was Lucy's suitor. But Stephen was untiring in his attentions to Maggie. He suggested that they should go to the river for a row. Lucy and Maggie agreed. Stephen was inwardly hoping to be able to hold Maggie's hand in the course of rowing. But he not only got the opportunity to touch her hands but also to hold her for a few moments when she slipped in the boat. That evening Maggie also experienced certain new emotions. Stephen seemed to have come from a world that was made up of love, beauty and delight. Every time he had looked at her, she had seen admiration in his eyes. She had also enjoyed his singing.

Walk in the garden : Stephen was a daily visitor at Lucy's house. But not the slightest suspicion crossed Lucy's mind that Stephen had fallen in love with Maggie. Stephen's attentions were not without some effect on Maggie's mind. One day Stephen came to Lucy's house at a time when he was not expected and when Lucy was not at home. Stephen came intentionally in order to have some time alone with Maggie. Maggie felt much embarrassed by this visit. They had a little conversation. When leaving, Stephen suggested that she might come out a little way into the garden. He offered his arm to her. She took the arm and they walked together in the garden. Then realizing that she was doing a wrong, she rushed back into the house and began to think of Philip. Stephen went away thinking that he ought to overcome his desire for Maggie.

Maggie's conflict : The next day both Philip and Stephen came to Lucy's house. This was Maggie's first meeting with Philip after about two years. Philip perceived Stephen's interest in Maggie and felt very jealous. Maggie was aware of Stephen looking at her. Somehow she enjoyed this feeling, although she believed that she was still in love with Philip. Some days later, a charity bazaar was held in the town. Stephen got an opportunity to talk to Maggie alone at her stall. She urged him to go away. But now she knew that

she had fallen under the spell of Stephen. Still she tried her utmost to conquer her feeling in order to keep her conscience clear as everybody believed that Stephen was going to marry Lucy. Maggie did not wish to hurt either the feelings of Lucy or the feelings of Philip by developing a love-affair with Stephen. If Maggie were to marry Stephen she would be able to live a life of comfort, luxury, culture and refinement. But she could not forget Lucy's claim upon Stephen nor did she wish to give a shock to Philip whom she still loved because of her past relations with him.

At the dance : A few days after the charity bazaar had ended, Maggie met Stephen at a dance at his house. Stephen found an opportunity to take Maggie out of the dance hall. They walked about together arm in arm. Suddenly Stephen started showering kisses upon Maggie's wrist. Maggie became furious and said that he had no right to take such a liberty with her. She asked him to leave her to herself and to avoid her in future. She was, no doubt, in love with Stephen but she realized that she should not be treacherous to Lucy. Next morning, Philip came to see her. She told him that she loved him and would have liked to marry him but that she did not wish to alienate her brother completely. Maggie now went to stay for a few days with her aunt, Mrs. Moss. There she received an unexpected visit from Stephen who told her that he was madly in love with her and that he was willing to stake everything for her sake. Maggie explained that she could not be false to Lucy and that, besides, she had given a word to Philip that if she married at all, she would marry Philip. Stephen urged her to drive out such scruples from her mind. He said that her duty to Lucy or her promise to Philip was nothing as compared to their love for each other. But Maggie resisted his proposal, although she permitted him to kiss her before he went away. Afterwards she felt very angry with herself because she had not found it possible to say yes to Stephen's proposal of marriage.

The elopement : There was now a fierce battle of emotions in Maggie's heart. There were moments when she thought that she must look to her own happiness and not take into account the feelings of Lucy or Philip. But then her conscience told her

that she had a duty towards both of them. One day Stephen took her out for rowing. In the boat Maggie was lost in her own thoughts. She did not realise that the boat had passed far beyond the village where they were to get down. On realizing that Stephen had taken her a long way beyond that village, she began to sob in an agony at the thought of what Lucy would feel. Stephen caught hold of her hands and said that they should never go back again till they were married. Stephen spoke with deep and passionate pleading. Maggie's heart softened. She half decided to agree to Stephen's proposal but soon the old scruples returned to her mind with an even greater force. So she told Stephen that she could not marry him. He pleaded with her again and again, asking her not to destroy his and her own happiness. But Maggie had made up her mind to suffer and to sacrifice. She had made a great renunciation. She returned to St. Ogg's alone, without having married Stephen.

Maggie's final decision : At St. Ogg's Maggie found herself the object of contempt on account of the way she had run away with Stephen. She was now looked down upon as a degraded person. She received a letter from Stephen in which he renewed his proposal of marriage. This letter revived the conflict in Maggie's mind. There was still a chance for her to make herself happy. After all, what had her renunciation and sacricfie brought her ? Her own brother had not pardoned her and the people of St. Ogg's were frankly contemptuous towards her. She had only to write to Stephen to come to her and that would be an end to her misfortunes. But once again her sense of duty to Lucy and to Philip came to her with a great intensity. The conflict between accepting Stephen's offer and the voice of her conscience forbidding her to do so was agonising. But it ended with Maggie's holding Stephen's letter to the candle and letting it burn. She had decided that the path of renunciation would be best for her. And then, of course, came the flood in which she and her brother perished, locked in a close embrace.

Maggie's character in the light of this love-affair : Maggie's love affair with Stephen shows that her love for Philip was not of that all-absorbing kind which makes it impossible for the thought of another man to enter a woman's mind. In other words,

her love for Philip was not that kind of passion which envelops a woman's entire personality, body and soul and mind, and which enslaves her to the man of her heart. It may be that her falling in love with Stephen was in some measure the consequence of her realization that her brother's attitude towards Philip would never permit her to marry Philip. But then it was obvious to her from the very beginning that any entanglement with Stephen would be fraught with disastrous consequences in view of Stephen's having been the declared lover of Lucy. It is really puzzling as to why Maggie fell in love with Stephen when she had always thought herself to be so devoted to Philip as never to think of any other man. The only conclusion that we can come to is that Maggie's love for Phillp was based more upon her sympathy for him and her gratitude towards him for the affection that he had always shown to her. In other words, her love for Philip was not that kind of flaming passion which burns in a woman's breast only once and for one man only. This flaming passion she felt for Stephen. Stephen cast a spell upon her and she was fascinated by him. Probably Stephen's social status had something to do with her love for him. But that could not be the determining factor. In fact, Maggie had a complex nature. While on one hand she wanted to marry Philip, on the other she almost surrendered to Stephen's pleading and entreaties. This conflict in her mind was most agonizing. But we must admire her for her final decision. She chose the path of sacrifice and renunciation, thereby establishing herself as a true heroine worthy of the highest esteem and respect. We must, however, admit that her falling in love with Stephen was not very creditable in view of the fact that Stephen did not possess any exceptional qualities of head and heart. But the working of a woman's mind is mysterious and to ask why Maggie fell in love with Stephen is to ask an unanswerable question.

(*vi*) The Final Rescue

Maggie was very unhappy: After returning from Mudport where she had gone with Stephen, Maggie had taken up lodgings in the house of Bob Jakin, because her brother Tom had

not allowed her entry into his own house on the ground that she had disgraced the family name by her elopement with cousin Lucy's fiance. She had made a great sacrifice in giving up Stephen for the sake of Lucy and for the sake of Philip. She had lost her own good name. The people of St. Ogg's held her in contempt. Her own brother was alienated from her. In short, she was very unhappy and miserable.

Stephen's letter and the coming of the flood : Maggie now received a letter from Stephen. In his letter Stephen again pleaded with Maggie not to forsake him. He said that it was still possible for them to get married and thus to save themselves from ruining their lives. The letter was written in a tone of passion and entreaty. It revived the conflict in Maggie's mind. There was still a chance to make herself happy in life. After all, what had she gained by her renunciation and self-sacrifice ? Her own brother had not pardoned her and the people of St. Ogg's were frankly contemptuous and hostile to her. Now she had only to write to Stephen to come to her and that would be an end to her misfortunes. But once again her sense of duty to Lucy and to Philip returned with an even greater intensity. The conflict in her mind ended. She held Stephen's letter to the candle and allowed it to burn. Just then, she suddenly felt a cold sensation about her knees and feet. She found that it was water flowing into the room. It was the flood about which there had been some talk in the town for the past several days because of the heavy rainfall that had been taking place. Now the flood had come.

Maggie went in a boat to rescue her brother and mother. Maggie rushed upstairs and awakened Bob Jakin. Bob Jakin's house was situated close to the river. A couple of boats which were moored at the bank of the river had just been driven by the flood close to Bob Jakin's house. The one dominating thought in Maggie's mind at this time was the danger that threatened her brother and her mother at their house near Dorlcote Mill. Maggie did some quick thinking and then, getting into one of the boats, rowed towards the house where she was born and where she had spent her childhood. There was now only one thought in her mind and it was that she must

save her brother and mother. She strained herself to the utmost to reach the house. Her anxiety to save her brother and mother overswayed all sense of danger to herself. Her old love of her brother had risen in her and she looked forward to a new understanding with him. At last she succeeded in getting close to the house. The level of the water had risen so high that Maggie's boat was on level with the upper windows of the house. She shouted for Tom. Tom appeared in the window and was surprised to see Maggie in a boat. He told her that their mother had gone to Garum Firs a couple of days earlier. Tom then stepped into the boat and took the oars. It was not till he had pushed off and they were on the wide water, that the full meaning of what had happened rushed upon his mind. He realized with an overpowering force that Maggie had come to rescue him at a great peril to herself. He was unable to ask any questions. They sat silently gazing at each other, Maggie with eyes of intense life looking out from a weary and beaten face ; Tom, pale with a certain awe and humiliation. At last Tom managed to utter his sister's name "Magsie" in the manner in which he used to utter it when he was a boy. Maggie could make no answer but a long, deep sob of that wondrous happiness which is one with pain. All misunderstanding had been swept away and the love of their younger days was revived with all its depth and sincerity.

The end : Suddenly they saw huge pieces of wooden machinery being carried on the flood towards them. They realized that it was not possible for them to get the boat out of the way of those huge masses. It was clear to them that their end had come. Tom left the oars and rushed towards his sister. They clasped each other in a mutual embrace. The floating masses had come close upon them. The next instant the boat was no longer seen upon the water, but the huge masses were hurrying along on the flood in hideous triumph. A little later the boat reappeared, but brother and sister had gone down in an embrace never to be parted. Fate had played a cruel trick upon Tom and Maggie just when they had been reconciled and reunited with each other.

(*vii*) Dramatic and Gripping Situations

The quarrel between Mr. Tulliver and Mrs. Glegg: There are quite a number of scenes and situations that are gripping or engrossing because of their dramatic qualities. The situations in which the aunts and uncles first appear in the novel to discuss Mr. Tulliver's proposition regarding Tom's education is one of these. The authoress has individualized each of the uncles and aunts especially Mrs. Glegg with whom Mr. Tulliver had a sharp breeze. Mrs. Glegg's disapproval of Mr. Tulliver's proposal regarding Tom's education, irritated Mr. Tulliver, at which she hinted at the loan of five hundred pounds which Mrs. Tulliver owed to her. Mr. Tulliver pointed out that she had got a bond for the loan and that she was getting five per cent interest on it. Mrs. Glegg felt insulted by this answer and said that she had not come to her sister's house in order to be abused. Mr. Tulliver, unable to restrain himself, said that he never quarrelled with a woman who kept her place. The retort infuriated Mrs. Glegg. She left the house in a temper, feeling terribly annoyed not only with Mr. Tulliver but also with her husband for not having taken her side. Of course, this quarrel between Mr. Tulliver and Mrs. Glegg has to be read through in the original in order to be fully enjoyed.

Mr. Tulliver's visit to his sister and brother-in-law: Mr. Tulliver's visit to the house of Mr. Moss, the husband of his sister Gritty, in order to get back the three hundred pounds which his brother-in-law owed to him, is another incident that leaves an impression on the reader's mind. Mr. and Mrs. Moss were in very straitened circumstances, besides having as many as eight children to feed. Mr. Tulliver learnt that his brother-in-law could pay him the money only by selling every thing that he had in the house. Tulliver's heart was touched. He felt that he should not compel his brother-in law to repay the loan. He thought of his own daughter Maggie and how one day Maggie might need the help of her brother Tom in some hour of difficulty. Mr. Tulliver, thereupon, returned home after telling his sister Gritty not to worry about the money. It was, indeed, a touching show of affection on the part of the miller towards his sister.

The disaster that befell the Tulliver family: An unforgettable scene in this novel is the disaster that befell and overwhelmed the Tulliver family. Mr. Tulliver lost the law suit but never realized that it would reduce him to a state of pauperism. The real implications of his losing the law suit flashed upon his mind only when he learnt that Mr. Furley with whom his land was mortgaged has transferred the mortgage to the lawyer, Wakem. This had a crushing effect upon his spirit. He got an attack of paralysis and fell down from his horse.

Mr. Tulliver's humiliation: When the miller's entire property had been sold away, he was confronted with a most humiliating proposition, namely that he must serve as manager of the mill with Wakem as his employer. His wife pressed him to agree to the proposition and the miller's reply to his wife was, "You may do as you like with me, Bessy. I have been the bringing of you to poverty.................this world's too many for me....................................I'm nought but a bankrupt..............it's no use standing up for anything now." The poor miller had no choice but to submit to the humiliation. But that did not mean that he had suddued his desire for revenge upon Wakem. On the contrary he made his son, Tom, write in the family Bible that he would never forgive Wakem and would always look out for an opportunity for revenge.

Tom's anger on knowing about the secret meetings between Maggie and Philip: Another dramatic scene in the story occurs when Tom came to know of his sister Maggie's secret meetings with Philip in the Red Deeps. Tom demanded a confession from Maggie, threatening her that if she concealed anything he would talk to his father about it. She admitted that she had been meeting Philip secretly. Tom severely rebuked her for having deceived her family. Tom then confronted her with a more difficult choice. Either she was to swear on the Bible that she would never again meet Philip privately or Tom would tell his father everything. It was a crushing alternative to Maggie but she gave Tom a promise that she would not meet Philip again without Tom's permission. Tom then accompanied her to the Red Deeps where Philip was to meet her. Tom used abusive language towards Philip and warned him to keep away from Maggie.

The assault upon Wakem: Mr. Tulliver's assault upon Wakem is also a gripping incident. Mr. Tulliver paid off all his debts and was returning home on horse-back when he met Wakem. Wakem used some harsh words at which Tulliver pounced upon him and flogged him severely with his horse-whip. Wakem went away after threatening a severe punishment to Tulliver. The excitement of the assault proved too much for Tulliver and he died after muttering that this world was no fit place for an honest man to live in. Tom and Maggie clung to each other and wept together over this domestic tragedy:

The scene between Wakem and his son: A heated scene took place between Wakem and his son, Philip, when Philip told his father that he was in love with Maggie and that his father should agree to the sale of the mill to Messrs. Guest & Co. Wakem lost his temper and rebuked his son for wanting to marry the daughter of a man who had assaulted him and who had been his sworn enemy. Soon, however, Wakem softened and agreed not only to sell the mill but also to accept Maggie as his daughter-in-law.

Maggie's elopement with Stephen. Maggie's elopement with Stephen and her unexpected return without marrying him constitute one of the high-lights of the story. Maggie had fallen under the spell of Stephen and wanted to marry him. But her moral scruples prevented her from doing so. She experienced an agonizing conflict. On one hand was the prospect of a happy and prosperous life with Stephen, but on the other hand were the moral scruples which would not let her prove treacherous to Lucy and Philip. She chose the path of renunciation and self-sacrifice and decided to give up Stephen. She returned to St. Ogg's but her brother refused her entry into his house.

The final rescue: The final incident of the story is, of course, unforgettable. Maggie sat in her room in Bob Jakin's house, lost in her thoughts after having finally decided to give up Stephen. Suddenly she felt a cold sensation about her feet and legs. It was water flowing into the room. She realized that it was the flood which had been talked about in the town during the past several days on account of the heavy rain-fall that had been taking place. Maggie now thought of the danger that

threatened her brother and mother at their house near Dorlcote Mill. She managed to get into a boat and rowed towards her brother's house. All her old love of her brother bad risen in her heart and she looked forward to a new understanding with him. She rescued Tom and the two were now reconciled towards each other. But a little later they saw huge pieces of wooden machinery floating towards them on the flood at a great speed. It was not possible for them to get the boat out of the way of those huge masses. They realized that their end had come. They clasped each other in a mutual embrace and got ready to die. The next moment the boat was no longer visible upon the water. Brother and sister had gone down into the water in an embrace never to be parted.

(*iii*) The Most Dramatic and Interesting Scene

There are a number of very interesting scenes and situations in *The Mill On The Floss* and it is very difficult to say which one of them is the most interesting. But if a choice must be made, I would give the first place to the scene between Maggie and Tom when Tom learnt about the secret meetings of Maggie and Philip, immediately followed by the angry scene between Tom and Philip. Maggie and Philip used to have their secret meetings in a thicket called the Red Deeps. A suspicion having crossed the mind of Tom, he took the earliest opportunity to talk privately to Maggie about this matter. He threatened to speak to his father about it if Maggie did not confess the whole truth. Maggie felt compelled to make the confession in order to spare the feelings of her father. She told Tom that she had been meeting Philip for about a year and that Philip had been lending her books. She also said that she and Philip were in love with each other. Tom severely rebuked Maggie for having been a disobedient and deceitful girl who had thrown away her own respectability by secret meetings with the son of a man who had been responsible for her father's ruin. He asked Maggie either to take a vow with her hand on the Bible that she would never meet again Philip privately or to be prepared for the consequences of her father being made acquainted with her secret love-affair. It was a crushing alternative to Maggie. But she did not wish to give a shock to her father. So she said that she would not meet Philip again but that it was not necessary

for her to swear on the Bible. But Tom bluntly said that he could trust her only if she were to swear on the Bible because there was no consistency in her. Tom added that all this time he had been exerting himself and giving up everything else for the sake of paying off his father's debts while she had brought shame to all of them. Maggie explained that she might have been wrong in developing an intimacy with Philip but that she had been very lonely and had felt sorry for Philip. She added that she thought enmity and hatred to be wicked feelings. But Tom was not prepared to take a lenient view of Maggie's conduct and Maggie had to swear on the Bible that she would not meet Philip again without Tom's permission. She, however, said that she must meet him once more for the last time. Tom said that he would not object to her last meeting with Philip if she met him in her brother's presence.

Accordingly, Tom accompanied Maggie into the Red Deeps where Philip was waiting for Maggie. Tom was in a furious mood. He spoke to Philip in a voice of scorn and accused him of ungentlemanly conduct in having taken advantage of a young girl's foolishness and ignorance. He said that Philip had been trifling with the respectability of a family which had a good and honest name. Philip emphatically denied this accusation and said that he loved Maggie in an honourable way and that he would even give up his life for her sake. Tom replied that he did not wish to hear any high-flown nonsense. He said that, in the first place, Philip was not a fit husband for Maggie and that in the second place, their respective fathers would never consent to a marriage between Philip and Maggie. Tom went on to say that Philip had wormed himself into the affections of a handsome girl who was hardly eighteen and who had been shut out from the world by her father's misfortunes. Tom warned Philip against daring to make the least attempt to come near Maggie in future or to write to her. He said that he would thrash Philip publicly if he tried to contact Maggie and that he would show no consideration for his puny, miserable, deformed body. At this stage, Maggie intervening tried to explain to Philip that for the sake of her father she had been made to take a vow to keep away from Philip. Philip said that he would respect Maggie's wishes but that his feelings toward her would never change. Philip then left and Maggie burst out, saying

that she had renounced Philip not for the sake of Tom but for the sake of her father. She said that Tom had been wrong in making insulting remarks about Philip's deformity. She also said that Tom had always been hard and cruel to her, that he had no pity, that he had no sense of his own faults, and that he was not a true Christian. Tom's final answer to her on this occasion was, "Very well; that is your view of things. You need say no more to show me what a wide distance there is between us. Let us remember that in future, and be silent."

IV. IMPORTANT CHARACTERS IN THE NOVEL

1. Maggie Tulliver

What Maggie's parents thought of her : When the story of the novel begins, Maggie was nine years old. Her mother thought her to be a very naughty child. But her father had a very favourable opinion of her. Her father thought her to be very cute and he felt happy in the belief that the girl took after, not her mother's family, but her father's family. From her very childhood she was greatly interested in reading and her father was proud of the fact that at nine she could read "almost as well as the parson." But her mother always grumbled about Maggie's habits and behaviour. Her mother said that it was impossible to keep her in a clean pinafore for two hours together. Besides, Maggie's hair did not curl in spite of her mother's best efforts. Maggie's habit of wandering close to the river was another source of annoyance to her mother. To add to her mother's disappointment, Maggie had a brown skin. All these characteristics of Maggie made her a comical girl in the eyes of her mother.

Impulsive and rebellious : Moggie was an impulsive, self-willed and rebellious girl. Once, feeling disappointed because her mother had not allowed her to accompany her father to the academy to bring Tom back home, she suddenly dipped her head in a basin of water in retaliation so as to make it impossible for her mother to brush or dress her hair. On another occasion, feeling the sharpness of her mother's reproach regarding her hair, she cut her hair short with a large pair of

scissors thus creating a sensation in the family. Her running away to the gypsies was another example of her impulsiveness. Nor did Maggie make a secret of her dislike for her uncles and aunts. She came into clash with her uncles and aunts when they suggested that the amount of three hundred pounds should be demanded from Mr. and Mrs. Moss. She even rebuked her mother for the latter's anxiety about the household goods when Mr. Tulliver seemed to be on the brink of death. Indeed, Maggie was unlike Lucy who was gentle like a lamb. And yet Maggie has been considered weak-minded because she submitted too passively to her brother, Tom, when he forbade her to marry Philip or even to meet Philip. Indeed, Maggie was a complex, sensuous, passionate personality at war with forces both within her and without, seeking a personal, social and spiritual emancipation.

Maggie's love for Tom : The most striking quality of Maggie from her childhood till the time of her death was her deep attachment and devotion to her brother, Tom. She thought Tom to be a very brave boy and believed that he was as brave as Samson. She could never bear to injure Tom's feelings. During their childhood days, whenever Tom felt angry with her, she would feel very wretched and miserable and would shed profuse tears. Whenever she offended Tom, she took the utmost pains to soothe and appease him. On one occasion when Tom showed a preference for Lucy's company, Maggie became so jealous that she pushed Lucy into a mud pond. She cried bitterly when she realised that she had neglected to look after Tom's rabbits. Indeed, the slighest indifference on the part of Tom towards her made her life look dark. The need of being loved by someone, and specially by Tom, was the strongest need in her nature. When Tom hit her for misbehaving towards Lucy, she ran away to the gypsies because of Tom's cruelty. Even when Maggie became a grown-up girl, her love for her brother continued to be her deepest feeling. She stopped meeting Philip when Tom forbade her to do so. She kept her promise of never meeting Philip without Tom's permission. She did not marry Philip because of Tom's threat that she would lose her brother completely if she married Philip. It hurt her deeply when Tom refused to

allow her entry into his house on her return to St. Ogg's after having run away with Stephen. Tom's lack of confidence in her grieved her much. Finally, when the flood came, her strongest and most dominant desire was to rescue Tom. She risked her own life in trying to do so.

Her love for her father: Her love for her father was only next to her love for Tom. Her father always took her side. He affectionately called her "the little wench". When she returned home after her adventure among the gypsies, she sobbed with her head against her father's shoulder and promised that she would never again run away from him. When her father was stricken by paralysis she attended upon and nursed him and felt extremely anxious about his state of health. She stood up for her father when the uncles and aunts blamed him for getting involved in litigation and thus ruining his family. Nor did she agree with the uncles and aunts in their proposal that Mr. and Mrs. Moss should be asked to arrange for the repayment of three hundred pounds which they owed to Tulliver. She knew that her father would not like that a demand for money should be made on Mr. and Mrs. Moss. When her father died, she felt deeply grieved.

Her love-affair with Philip: A controversial aspect of Maggie's character was her relations with Philip. She fell in love with Philip when she was still very young and had no experience about the ways of the world. This love never died. She kept meeting Philip secretly for over a year in the Red Deeps, knowing full well her father's feelings towards Philip's father. It is not possible for most readers to approve of Maggie's conduct in having secret meetings with Philip nor can the average reader understand how Maggie could have fallen in love with a deformed young man. But it should be clearly understood that where love between the sexes is concerned, the feelings of parents generally do not matter. The story of Romeo and Juliet is only one example of numerous cases of this kind. As for Maggie's falling in love with a deformed boy, it is not always the physical appearance of the man that matters much in the eyes of a woman. Maggie found an affinity between herself and Philip. Like her, he was lonely and friendless and needed sympathy and affection. All

the same, it cannot be denied that her meeting Philip secretly jars upon our minds to some extent. And yet it goes to her credit that she subordinated her love for Philip to the family sentiments in the case. What she might have done, if she had lived longer, is a matter of guess. Most probably she would ultimately have married Philip.

Her love-affair with Stephen : Her love for Stephen is the subject of another controversy. What really attracted Maggie to Stephen is difficult to understand, especially because she never ceased to love Philip. In all probability, it was the refinement and the glamour of the upper society which made Stephen appear a romantic hero to Maggie's imagination. In Stephen's company, Maggie felt elated and uplifted. Stephen seemed to have come from a world made up of beauty, love and delight. Her very first meeting with him awakened in her new emotions. So strong became her passion for Stephen that she allowed him, though absent-mindedly to carry her off to Mudport. Here, again, the conduct of Maggie is not likely to meet the approval of most readers. It offends our moral sense that Maggie should have run away with the fiance of her cousin Lucy who had always been so kind towards her. Here, again, most readers are apt to forget that if she ran away with Stephen under the stress of her passion, she did not yield to that passion and did not marry him, because of the moral scruples which dominated her.

The path of renunciation : Indeed, Maggie's final decision not to marry Stephen raises her to the level of a true heroine. The battle of emotions that raged in Maggie's breast was a fierce one. By marrying Stephen she could make her life happy and thus compensate herself for all the sorrows and misery she had suffered during the past many years. But the voice of her conscience warned her against taking such a step. She chose the path of renunciation and self-sacrifice. She realized that her marriage with Stephen would break the hearts of Lucy and Philip and this was something she could not endure. After a most agonizing conflict, she came to the decision which raises her very high in our estimation.

An autobiographical portrait : In drawing Maggie's portrait,

George Eliot has put much of herself into it. In other words, Maggie Tulliver is no other than what George Eliot herself was in youth. Maggie Tulliver, the sensitive, passionate child, craving for her brother's love, the ardent girl, growing up in a narrow world with a thirst for life, beauty, knowledge, is the young Mary Ann Evans herself, transmuted into fiction. Maggie's childish troubles were the childish troubles of George Eliot herself. Just as Maggie was often in disgrace and was considered plain and tiresome, so was George Eliot as a child. Just as Maggie was compared unfavourably with her pretty, docile cousin, Lucy, so was George Eliot as a child compared unfavourably with her sister Chrissey. The attic to which Maggie retired when in distress was the attic to which George Eliot had retired in her father's house. Even Maggie's falling in love with Stephen who was almost engaged to her cousin Lucy seems to be a modified version of George Eliot's falling in love with Lewes who was a married man and with whom George Eliot lived as his unmarried wife.

The conflict of Maggie : the inner conflict : Maggie's personality may be described as complex, sensuous and passionate. Maggie had to fight a hard battle with herself to keep her impulses and emotions under check. Thus she had an inhibited or repressed personality. On one hand, she craved for a complete fulfilment of the desires of the senses and the heart ; on the other hand, she felt strongly drawn towards the path of complete renunciation and self-sacrifice. When she fell in love with Stephen and ran away with him, she experienced an agonising conflict. By marrying Stephen she could lift herself to a higher social level and she could have at her command all the means of worldly pleasures. But she realized that, by marrying Stephen, she would be committing a great wrong to her cousin Lucy and an act of cruelty to Philip. She asked herself whether she could be really happy as Stephen's wife with that heavy weight upon her conscience. There was a fierce battle of emotions in her heart. With a supreme effort of will, she conquered the temptation and decided to follow the path of renunciation and self-sacrifice. The agonising conflict was revived when Stephen wrote her a letter. Once again she was faced with an exceedingly difficult choice but she came to

a super-human decision, namely, the decision to sacrifice her personal feelings for the sake of the happiness of others.

The conflict with outward forces : Maggie was likewise at war against certain outside forces. She felt that she was completely out of harmony with her environment. She revolted against the boring and conventional social pattern into which she was born. She experienced a sort of divine discontent with her family and social environment and so she struggled towards a social and personal emancipation. She struggled against the narrow-mindedness and rigidity of her brother, Tom, and she struggled against the cruel orthodoxy and the false values of life of the society of St. Ogg's. Her brother, Tom, and her uncles and aunts symbolise the confining or restrictive family environment with which she had to contend, while the provincial society of St. Ogg's symbolises the narrow mentality of her social environment. "The pent-up poetry in her soul beats its luminous wings against the conservatism, the self-complacency, the lack of imagination of the long-established provincial society within which she is confined."

2. Tom Tulliver

His shyness in boyhood : Tom was the son of Mr. Edward Tulliver who owned Dorlcote Mill. When the story begins he was a boy of thirteen and this is how George Eliot describes him, "He was one of those lads that grow everywhere in England, and, at twelve or thirteen years of age, look as much alike as goslings—a lad with light brown hair, cheeks of cream and roses, full lips, indeterminate nose and eye-brows." He felt very shy in the presence of his elders. This shyness caused him much misery when he was a pupil under the charge of Mr. Stelling.

His relations with Maggie : Tom was the favourite child of his mother who was, indeed, very fond of him. His father also loved him but he believed his son to be somewhat slow both of tongue and mind. Mr. Tulliver always said that Tom took after his mother's family. This he meant to be a sort of criticism of Tom's level of intelligence. Tom loved his sister Maggie but not as much as she loved him. He often disregarded her feelings thereby making her miserable. He never

made any effort to fathom the depths of Maggie's affection for him. It is true that when he was a boy he would try to soothe Maggie by offering her a piece of cake or he would bring a present in the form of a fishing rod for her, but he also scolded her often, thus causing Maggie to shed secret tears. He often called her "silly", "stupid", "spitfire". On one occasion he expressed his distinct preference for the company of Lucy and even said that it would have been much better if Lucy instead of Maggie had been his sister. On growing up, Tom shared his father's hatred for the Wakem family while Maggie developed a love-affair with Wakem's son, Philip. When Tom learnt about Maggie's secret meetings with Philip, he rebuked her severely. On this occasion, Maggie complained that Tom had always been hard and callous towards her, that he had never realised his own faults and shortcomings and that he was wrong in having made insulting references to Philip's physical deformity. Indeed, Tom took a very intolerant view of Maggie's love-affair with Philip. He made it clear to her that if she thought of marrying Philip she must be prepared to break off all connections with her brother. He made her take a vow that she would never meet Philip without his permission. He plainly told her that he could not trust her and that she was a deceitful girl. Nor did Tom show her any leniency after her misadventure in running away with Stephen. He refused to allow her entry into his house and said that she was nothing to him. He accused her, as on a former occasion, of having disgraced and dishonoured the family name. Critics have taken a very unfavourable view of Tom's behaviour towards Maggie. They say that he was incapable of understanding the subtle mind of Maggie or of sympathising with her in her emotional entanglements. For this reason they think him a hateful or detestable person.

It must, however, be pointed out that on both occasions when Tom severely rebuked Maggie (first, when he came to know of her secret meetings with Philip, and later when she returned after having eloped with Stephen), Tom had strong reasons for doing so. It is not unnatural for a brother to stop his sister from developing intimacy with the son of a hostile father, a father who had been instrumental in bringing

about the ruin of the Tulliver family. From time immerorial brothers have claimed the right to prevent their sisters from taking such a step. In the case of Maggie's elopement with Stephen, Maggie herself realized the great wrong that she had done. We cannot, therefore, blame Tom for taking a similar view of her conduct. It is true that Tom was a bit too severe and too rigid in his judgment of Maggie's conduct but we cannot wholly blame him in view of the fact that Maggie had certainly been deceiving her family by her secret meetings with Philip and the further fact that Maggie betrayed both Lucy and Philip by running away with Stephen, although subsequently she renounced Stephen. We cannot, therefore, pass a wholly adverse judgment upon Tom.

He thought himself to be always right: It was certainly a serious fault in Tom that he thought himself to be always right. He was obstinate, and almost buffalo-headed, in his views. Surely, he took a narrow view of his sister's conduct. Even as a boy he suffered from this fault. In view of this, there is much truth in the statement "that Tom is stupid, self-righteous, and uncomprehending."

His courage and perseverance. Tom deserves a lot of admiration for his courage and pluck in the face of the family disaster. He had been brave even in his boyhood. He had thrashed almost every bully at Jacob's Academy. He had thrashed even his playmate, Bob Jakin, who tried to cheat him and to whom he had previously given a present in the shape of a pocket knife. He bluntly accused all his uncles and aunts of being most unhelpful in the hour of crisis for the Tulliver family though in doing so he incurred the keen displeasure of his uncles and aunts. He stoutly refused to demand the three hundred pounds which Mr. and Mrs. Moss owed to Mr. Tulliver, knowing full well Mr. Tulliver's feelings towards his sister, Gritty. He shared his father's hatred of the Wakem family and opposed the proposal that his father should become the manager of Dorlcote Mill as an employee of Wakem. He worked very hard in order to save enough to be able to pay off the family debts. He sacrificed his rest, his comfort and every pleasure of life in order to redeem family honour. It was chiefly through his earnings that Mr. Tulliver was ultimately

able to pay off all his debts and call himself a free man. He even succeeded in partly fulfilling the dying wish of his father because, having prevailed upon Messrs. Guest & Co. to buy Dorlcote Mill, he and his mother shifted to the old house which had previously belonged to them.

His final reconciliation with Maggie. The last episode in the story throws some additional light on the character of Tom. Seeing Maggie in the boat, he realized the great risk that she had taken in order to come to rescue him. All misunderstandings were swept away from his mind. His heart was flooded with emotion and he called his sister by the affectionate name "Magsie" by which he used to call her when he was a boy. He took her in his embrace when it was clear that their end had come. There is no doubt that if he and Maggie had survived the flood, a new chapter in their relations as brother and sister would have begun and that both would have drawn comfort and strength from each other ; but fate is relentless and it did not suit the mysterious purposes of fate that Tom and Maggie should survive the flood.

3. Edward Tulliver, the miller

Neither poor nor prosperous : Edward Tulliver was the owner of Dorlcote Mill which he had inherited from his ancestors. There was some land attached to the mill but this land was under mortgage. Tulliver also owed five hundred pounds to his sister-in-law, Mrs. Glegg. At the same time, he had lent three hundred pounds to his brother-in-law, Mr. Moss. He did not have much cash in hand. Thus, financially speaking, he was neither poor nor prosperous at the commencement of the story.

A man of strong views : Tulliver was a man of very strong views. He was obstinate in holding his views and opinions. For instance, he was very particular to give his son, Tom, an excellent education, an education that would develop in the boy a faculty for quick thinking and a capacity for fluent talking. He wanted his son to become a bit of a scholar so that he might prove to be a match for the tricks of those fellows who could talk fine and who could write with a flourish. Accordingly,

once he had made up his mind (at the advice of Mr. Riley) to send his son for education to the Rev. Walter Stelling, not all the opposition of Tom's uncles and aunts could shake him from his purpose. He believed that his son's education was his business, not the business of Tom's aunts and uncles and he did send his son to Mr. Stelling although Mrs. Glegg quarrelled with him on this point and he was compelled to borrow five hundred pounds from another party in order to pay off Mrs. Glegg. Indeed, he did not wish to feel beholden to any of the relations of his wife.

His relations with his wife : Tulliver's attitude towards his wife was rather patronizing. He knew that his wife was intellectually inferior to him and he never hesitated to exploit this natural advantage which he had over her. He never yielded to his wife's exhortations or entreaties. For instance, she urged him not to get involved in litigation but that only stiffened him in his decision to go to law against his opponent. He always found fault with his wife's family. For instance, he would tell his wife again and again that Maggie who was cleverer than Tom took after his (Tulliver) family, while Tom who was rather slow of thinking and talking took after his mother's (Dodson) family.

His general views on life : Tulliver found this world of human beings to be "a puzzling world". Again and again, he would remark that it was a puzzling world. In his opinion, lawyers were a curse to society. He believed lawyers to be the product of the devil. Lawyer Wakem represented in his eyes the concentrated evil of all the lawyers of the world. He called Wakem a rogue and a scoundrel. While dying, Tulliver remarked that this world was no place for an honest man. The world had proved "too many" for him, he observed. Just as he was unyielding in his views, so he was unforgiving towards his enemies. He could not forgive Wakem throughout his life. He even made his son take a solemn vow not to forgive Wakem and to be always on the look-out for revenge, thus showing his vindictiveness. Apart from that, Tulliver possessed an exceptional courage, self-confidence and perseverance. It is true that he was stricken by paralysis as a result of the shock that he experienced on finding that Mr. Furley had transferred the mort-

gage of his land to Wakem and that he had been reduced to bankruptcy. But he did not waver even for an instant in his determination to pay off all his debts. It was only for the sake of his family that he agreed to become the manager of the mill as an employee of Wakem. He confessed to his wife that he was responsible for the ruin of the family and said to her, "You may do as you like with me Bessy ; I have been the bringing of you to poverty............this world's too many for me........ I'm nought but a bankrupt.........It's no use standing up for anything now." Thus he took the full blame for the blunder that he had committed in going to law. There was in him, as the authoress tells us, an element of contradiction. While he stoutly declared that he would never be beholden to his wife's relations, he expected financial help from the Pullets when he was faced with the danger of his household effects being sold away to pay off a loan. In this connection, George Eliot writes as follows : "It is precisely the proudest and most obstinate who are most liable to shift from their position and contradict themselves in this sudden manner : everything seemes easier to them than to face the simple fact that they have been thoroughly defeated and must begin life anew and *Mr. Tulliver, you perceive, though nothing more than a superior miller and maltster, was as proud and obstinate as if he had been a very lofty personage.*" It may be pointed out that it was precisely the pride and obstinacy of Tulliver that brought about his downfall. As has been said, above, he was most unforgiving tawards Wakem. Wakem's very name used to fill him with rage. And the day he paid off all his debts he was so intoxicated by the sense of triumph that he assaulted Wakem, which was a most rash and unwise thing to do. The excitement of the assault killed him. But even if he had not died there is no doubt that Wakem would have had him prosecuted and that the consequences of that prosecution would have been as disastrous as the consequences of the first law suit which had ruined the Tulliver family.

As a father and a brother : We must give credit to Tulliver for being a very good father. He gave to Tom an education much above his means. He was very fond of his daughter, Maggie whom he used to call "the little wench". He was also a very good brother. Even though he badly needed money, he

did not insist upon the repayment of the loan of three hundred pounds which his sister Gritty owed to him because he found that Gritty's financial condition was almost hopeless.

On the whole, Tulliver possessed a sterling character. He was a man of honesty and integrity. He was a man of self-respect and family pride. He was a man of great courage and daring. He was frank, upright and straightforward. There was nothing crooked or mean about him. His main faults were excessive pride, obstinacy, revengefulness and rashness.

4. Mrs. Tulliver

A true Dodson : Mrs. Tulliver was the youngest of the Dodson girls. The Dodsons were a very respectable family. The Dodson girls had always been taught to hold up their heads very high. In the Dodson family, there were particular ways of bleaching the linen, making the cowslip wine, curing hams and keeping the bottled goose-berries. When one of the family was in trouble or in sickness, all the rest went to visit the unfortunate member, usually at the same time, and did not shrink from uttering the most disagreeable truths. In short, there was in this family a peculiar tradition as to what was the right thing in household management and social behaviour. Mrs. Tulliver was a thorough Dodson. But she was a mild Dodson ; she had groaned a little in her youth under the yoke of her elder sisters ; and even after marriage shed occasional tears at their sisterly reproaches. Mrs. Glegg and Mrs. Pullet often scolded her for the naughtiness of her children. But Mrs. Tulliver retained the Dodson pride throughout her life. She was particularly fond of her son, Tom, because he took after the Dodson family in his features, in his complexion, in liking salt, in eating beans, etc. She was rather harsh towards Maggie because Maggie took after her father. Mrs. Tulliver was what is called a good-tempered person. She cried very little when she was a baby and from the cradle upward had been healthy, fair, plump and dull-witted ; in short, the flower of her family for beauty and amiability.

A submissive wife : Mrs. Tulliver was a submissive wife. She always yielded to her husband except on points connected

with her family relations. She was completely dominated by her husband, being intellectually inferior to him. Indeed, Mr. Tulliver bossed over her. He hardly ever listened to her advice or consulted her about his business. She urged him not to go to law in his dispute with Mr. Pivart. But her advice only stiffened him in his purpose to launch a law-suit against his enemy. If at all she stood up against her husband, it was when her relations were involved. For instance, when she invited her sisters and her brothers-in-law to her house she took care not to invite her husband's sister because she believed that his sister and her sisters did not suit well together. While Mr. Tulliver would say that the stock from which he came was superior to the stock from which his wife came, she would assert that while her sisters were likely to leave some money to her children, there was no relation of her husband's rich enough to leave any legacy to her children. On the whole, Mrs. Tulliver was a mild woman but sometimes she did try to assert herself, like a sheep who will face about a little when she has lambs.

Her fuss over her linen, china etc.: Mrs. Tulliver made a lot of fuss about her furniture, her china and her linen when Tulliver's defeat in the law-suit necessitated the auction of his household effects. Indeed, she expressed greater anxiety about the furniture, the linen and the china than about her husband who was at that time in a precarious condition on account of a stroke of paralysis. She shook her head a good deal and wept a good deal over the impending auction of her silver tea-pot, spoons, table-cloths and the rest of the articles. Indeed, she was in a state of piteous excitement on this occasion, although she had been usually quite passive. She deplored the fact that her husband had not lent her ear when she had advised him not to go to law. Indeed, Mrs. Tulliver's whole behaviour at the time of this crisis in the family was half-comic and half-pathetic.

A good mother: Mrs. Tulliver, it must be admitted, was a good mother. It is true that she used to scold Maggie a good deal when Maggie was a child. Maggie had become quite accustomed to her mother's habitual depreciation of her. But Mr. Tulliver was very fond of Tom. And even towards

Maggie she showed a true maternal feeling when Tom completely disowned her. When Maggie returned from Mudport after her misadventure with Stephen, she was not permitted by Tom to enter his house. On that occasion her mother took her side and went with her to comfort her and to look after her. By this single actions of hers, Mrs. Tulliver made up for all her past harshness and severity towards her daughter.

5. Lucy Deane

Neat, gentle, modest: In her childhood, Lucy was thought to be a model girl because of her neatness, prettiness, good manners, and gentleness. These qualities of Lucy received emphasis from the fact that her cousin Maggie was just the reverse of her. All the uncles and aunts were full of praise for Lucy because she was well-disciplined and meek and submissive. Even Tom had a preference for Lucy's company over the company of Maggie. Tom once said in so many words that it would have been much better if Lucy, not Maggie, had been his sister. On one occasion, he bluntly told Maggie not to pester him, and took Lucy with him to see the pond and to have a look at the pike. On this occasion, Maggie, in a fit of jealousy, pushed Lucy into the mud where she lay crying helplessly. When Lucy grew up into a young damsel, she retained her neatness and her prettiness and acquired several accomplishments including embroidery and music. She possessed a becoming modesty and thought her suitor, Stephen Guest, a great deal too good for her. She had a high opinion about Stephen and could not really believe that she was fit for his love. It seemed rather fantastic to her that she should ever live in a grand place like the Park House as the daughter-in-law of the senior partner of Messrs. Guest & Co. She thought herself to be a little, insignificant thing.

Simple-minded and free from jealousy: Lucy was perfectly simple-minded and tranquil-hearted. When she introduced Maggie to Stephen, she did not have the remotest idea of what this introduction might lead to. She could not conceive that the two would fall in love with each other or run away together. She did not suffer the slightest feeling of jealousy. On the contrary, she enjoyed her lover's society

all the more because of the presence of Maggie. She did not have the least suspicion about the relations between Maggie and Stephen till she actually learnt about their elopement and then the news came as a stunning shock which prostrated her. Poor Lucy did not deserve this crushing blow to her happiness.

Deeply sympathetic and affectionate : Lucy was full of the milk of human kindness. She felt a great sympathy for Maggie to whom she had been attached ever since childhood. She invited Maggie to stay with her as a relief from the monotony of Maggie's work as a school teacher. She tried her utmost to bring about the union of Maggie and Philip, although the relentless attitude of Tom made that union impossible. It was she who urged Philip to prevail upon his father to sell Dorlcote Mill to Messrs. Guest & Co. and at the same time urged her father to prevail upon his firm to buy Dorlcote Mill. Thus she did everything possible within her limited resources to help her cousins. For a few days, of course, she did believe that her cousin Maggie had played a dirty trick upon her by running away with Stephen ; but when Stephen's letter exonerating Maggie came, Lucy expelled all her suspicions and doubts from her mind, and trusting in Maggie's innocence, became reconciled to her. She expressed a great admiration for Maggie's spirit of self-denial and renunciation and even said to her, "Maggie, you are better than I am."

Her sense of humour : Lucy was not without a sense of humour. She could enjoy Stephen's jokes and she even played a practical joke upon him. She allowed Stephen to think that Maggie was an unattractive, fat, blonde girl with round blue eyes till Stephen was actually introduced to Maggie. She enjoyed Stephen's embarrassment on finding that his conjecture as to the physical appearace of Maggie had been completely falsified.

6. Philip Wakem

His artistic tastes ; Maggie's sympathy and affection for him : Philip was the son of the lawyer Wakem. He was a hunchback, not by birth but because of an accident that he had met during his childhood. He was a boy of artistic and literary

tastes. He was very good at his studies. He could draw ; he was a good singer ; he could tell fighting stories, stories about Richard the Lion-hearted, about Saladin, about William Wallace, about Robert Bruce and about other heroes. His stories used to fascinate both Tom and Maggie. Philip was a lonely and friendless person. He craved for sympathy and affection. Maggie was the first to give him that sympathy and affection. Philip had a very amiable disposition. He tried to befriend Tom but Tom was unresponsive because of his father's hostility towards the Wakem family. Tom was also contemptuous of Philip's deformity but Maggie showed a lot of sympathy for Philip because of that very deformity. In fact, much of Maggie's love for Philip was based upon her sympathy for him.

Lack of direction : As Philip grew up, he retained his literary and artistic tastes and even developed them. But he felt a want of direction in his life. He told Maggie, "I think of too many things—sow all sorts of seeds, and get no great harvest from any one of them. I'm cursed with susceptibility in every direction and effective faculty in none. I care for painting and music ; I care for classic literature and medieval literature and modern literature ; I flutter all ways and fly in none." He used to lend books to Maggie because he found that she too had a literary taste.

His honourable intentions towards Maggie : Philip was a very sensitive person. He was keenly conscious of his physical inferiority. But at the same time, he was a man of spirit. When Tom accused him of ungentlemanly conduct towards Maggie, he stoutly repudiated the charge and asserted that he had honourable intentions towards Maggie and that he could give his life for her. He called Tom a bully. There is no doubt, that, if he had not been a hunch-back, he would have taken up Tom's challenge. Tom's accusation that Philip had taken undue advantage of an inexperienced and helpless girl was, of course, entirely baseless. Philip was, indeed, a perfect gentleman. As Maggie once said, it was not Philip's fault that he was the son of a rascally father.

His enduring love for maggie : The most striking fact about Philip was his deathless love for Maggie. For Maggie he was prepared to make any sacrifice. He tried his utmost to win the

goodwill of Tom. He even prevailed upon his father to sell the mill to Messrs. Guest & Co. and he did so only to earn Tom's goodwill. Tom, however, remained rigid and relentless throughout. Philip's was not a selfish love. But he intensely desired to make Maggie his own. On perceiving the attraction between Maggie and Stephen he was stung by jealousy and almost lost his sleep. When Maggie returned from Mudport after her misadventure with Stephen, Philip wrote her a letter saying that he had complete faith in her and that he knew that she never meant to deceive him. In his letter, Philip appealed to her not to allow any self-reproach to weigh on her mind because of him. He added that he had no just claim on her for more than affectionate remembrance. Into this letter, Philip had poured his whole heart. Philip's love for Maggie was of the deepest and most enduring kind. His best hours were those which he had spent in the company of Maggie in the Red Deeps. After Maggie's death he would spend much of his time in the Red Deeps as a solitary individual. Maggie's death had caused in his life a void that could never be filled.

7. Stephen Guest

His social status : Stephen was the son of the senior partner in a wealthy firm called Messrs. Guest & Co. Thus he belonged to the upper level of society in the town of St. Ogg's. He was rich : he came of a high family ; he was well educated : he was handsome. It was generally believed that he would marry Lucy Deane to whom he had been paying court for some time. Before he met Maggie, he was quite sure in his mind that he would marry Lucy. Lucy was pretty, accomplished, gentle, affectionate, and not stupid. Even though his father and his sisters had felt somewhat disappointed at his choice of Lucy, he thought Lucy to be a little darling and exactly the sort of woman he wanted as his wife.

No exceptional qualities in him : Stephen's meeting with Maggie, however, gave an absolutely new direction to his thoughts and feelings. Maggie made a powerful impact upon his mind. He was simply swept off his feet by the beauty, charm and simplicity of Maggie, not to talk of a complete absence of coquetry in her. At first, as was natural, Maggie

showed indifference towards Stephen. But very soon she fell under his spell. It seemed to Maggie that Stephen had come from a world made up of beauty, delight and love. Meeting such a man was a new experience in her life. She felt thrilled to meet him. It is, of course, not quite clear what remarkable qualities Stephen possessed so as to fascinate a girl like Maggie. Lucy thought him to be very clever. In fact, she thought him too good for herself. But we notice a lapse on the part of George Eliot in drawing the portrait of this young man. We get the impression that Stephen was an average young man with an average mind. How, then, could he create such a powerful impression upon the mind of a sober, thoughtful girl like Maggie. True, that Stepen had a sense of humour and was gallant enough to pay clever compliments to a woman. We are certainly amused when, on being asked by Lucy if he could guess the important news that she had to give him, he replied that she was going to change her dog's diet and give it three ratafias soaked in a dessert spoonful of cream daily. His compliments to Maggie were also well-worded. But we have not been given any indication of Stephen's possessing any exceptional intellectual or moral qualities to lift him above the average plane. His attraction for Maggie, therefore, remains somewhat of a puzzle.

Inconstant towards Lucy : Stephen's love for Lucy was by no means deep or intense. He was stirred to the depths of his personality only when he met Maggie. He loved Maggie with every fibre of his body and mind. He tried every possible resource and every possible argument to convince Maggie that the only sensible course of action for her was to marry him and not to allow her moral scruples to destroy her life's happiness. Even when she returned to St. Ogg's after having said "no" to him, he wrote a letter to her renewing his passionate appeals and entreaties. His love for Maggie, like Philip's love for Maggie, was an all-absorbing passion, although it must be confessed that there was more in common between Philip and Maggie than between Stephen and Maggie. While we do appreciate Stephen's deep passion for Maggie, we cannot forget that he had been earlier paying court to another girl. But that act of inconstancy is perhaps pardonable.

8. Contrast between the characters of Maggie and Lucy

Lucy is intended as a foil to Maggie. In other words, the character of Lucy serves as a contrast to that of Maggie. We can better understand and appreciate the character of Maggie when we contrast her with Lucy. The contrast between their natures and habits was noticeable in their very childhood. All the uncles and aunts were full of praise for Lucy while they all (with the exception of Mrs. Moss) criticized Maggie. Lucy was believed to be a gentle and well-behaved girl. She was always neat and her hair was always properly curled. Maggie, on the contrary, was a rebellious and defiant child. Her own mother used to scold her a lot for what she called Maggie's naughtiness. Her mother used to complain that it was impossible to keep Maggie in a clean pinafore for two hours together. Besides, Maggie's hair did not curl in spite of her mother's best efforts. Maggie's habit of wandering close to the river was another source of annoyance to her mother. Lucy was a very obedient and well-disciplined girl. Even Tom preferred Lucy's company to that of Maggie. Maggie's cutting her hair with a pair of scissors and her running away to the gypsies emphasises the contrast between her and Lucy who was gentle like a lamb.

On growing up Lucy retained her gentleness, her neatness, her prettiness. Maggie, on growing up, continued to be impulsive as well as defiant towards her uncles and aunts. Lucy in Maggie's place would not have kept meeting Philip in the Red Deeps. It is true that Maggie stopped meeting Philip when her brother discovered the fact and rebuked her. But Lucy would never have created such a situation because Lucy was weak-minded as compared to Maggie. Nor would Lucy, in Maggie's place, have run away with Stephen. It is true that Maggie gave up Stephen and came back, but Lucy would not have involved herself in such an emotional complication. The fact is that Lucy was not only weak-minded as compared to Maggie but also very simple-minded as compared to Maggie. Indeed, there was a sharp contrast between the extreme simplicity of Lucy's nature and the complex nature of Maggie. Maggie, for instance, found herself divided between Philip and Stephen. Such a situation could never have arisen

in the life of Lucy. Besides, Lucy did not suspect in the least that Stephen and Maggie had fallen in love with each other. Consequently, when she learnt that the two had eloped, the news came to her as a stunning shock with prostrated her. Lucy was absolutely free from jealousy. She was a most amiable and trusting girl. Maggie was much more observant and, as her father used to say, cute. It must, at the same time, be pointed out that if Lucy had eloped with Maggie's lover she would have married him and would not have been able to renounce him. Maggie eloped with Lucy's lover and yet she renounced him at the sacrifice of her own happiness. Lucy was not capable of such renunciation and such self-sacrifice. That is why Lucy said to Maggie, "You are better than I."

9. Contrast between Tom and Philip

Physical differences : The characters of Tom Tulliver and Philip Wakem have been sharply contrasted in the novel by George Eliot. Tom was a healthy, strong and stout lad with a lot of physical energy and stamina. When a student at Jacob's Academy, he thrashed the bullies there. When his father was reduced to bankruptcy, Tom had to go to work in the morning and return in the evening after a whole day's hard work. Philip, on the contrary, was a hunch-back. Philip's hump was the result of an accident that he had met in his childhood. Tom and Philip had occasional quarrels when they were the pupils of Mr. Stelling. Tom used insulting language towards Philip. Normally, Philip would have fought with Tom on account of those insulting words, but being a hunch-back he had to swallow the insult. Similarly, when Tom abused Philip in the Red Deeps for having held secret meetings with Maggie, Philip had to put up with the indignity.

The literary tastes of Philip and the deficiency of Tom in studies : As a boy, Tom was interested in outdoor activities- He found much pleasure in locating birds' nests and their eggs, in going to took at the toads, in rat-catching, and similar other pursuits. He was not much interested in studies. He found a great difficulty in learning Geometry and Latin. Indeed, he found his studies a "bore" and "beastly stuff". Philip, on the contrary, was a boy of literary and artistic tastes. He was

very good at studies and he even used to help Tom with Latin and Geometry. Philip could also draw pictures ; he was a good singer ; he could tell numerous fighting stories. Philip retained his literary and artistic tastes throughout. It is true that he complained to Maggie that he was interested in too many things without being able to concentrate on any of them. He was interested in classical literature, medieval literature, modern literature and so on, but he felt that there was a want of direction in his life.

Tom a practical man ; Philip an emotional man : Tom was rather hard and callous by temperament. He never could sympathise with the feelings of Maggie. He could not understand Maggie's deep love for him when they were both grown-up. Philip, on the contrary, had a deeply emotional nature. The depth of his feeling for Maggie clearly shows that. For Maggie's sake he was ready to make any sacrifice. He told Tom that he could even give his life for the sake of Maggie. As a lover, Philip was ardent and passionate. His declarations of love to Maggie were couched in fervent language. Tom has not been shown in love at all. He plunged himself into an all-out effort to save family honour by making enough money to pay off his father's debts. He was much more practical than Philip could ever be. While Philip complained that there was no direction in his life, Tom was perfectly clear in his mind as to what he wanted. If he had not been cut short in the prime of life, he would surely have become as shrewd a business man as his uncle, Deane.

Tom's narrow-mindedness *versus* Philip's spirit of toleration : Tom fully shared his father's prejudice against Wakem. In accordance with the wish of his father, Tom did not develop any intimacy at school with Philip. Besides, Tom wrote in the family Bible that he would seek revenge upon the lawyer, Wakem. Nor could Tom tolerate the meetings of Maggie and Philip. Under no circumstance was Tom prepared to permit the marriage of his sister to the son of the lawyer, Wakem. His hatred of Wakem was as stubborn and relentless as his father's was. Philip, on the contrary, did not have any hatred for the Tulliver family. He passionately loved Maggie and he tried his utmost to appease Tom. He even prevailed

upon his father to sell Dorlcote Mill to Messrs. Guest & Co. Philip took this step only to remove one of the hurdles between him and Tom, though he did not succeed in pacifying Tom. For this and other reasons, Philip is a much more likable character than Tom. Tom did have his merits for which he deserves our admiration. But, then, Tom was callous, obstinate, narrow-minded, and intolerant. He thought himself always to be in the right. Philip did not suffer from these faults. Philip was gentle, kindly, sympathetic and tolerant.

10. Bob Jakin

Tom's playmate in boyhood : Bob Jakin was a playmate of Tom during their boyhood. Tom was quite fond of Bob in those days till he fell out with him. Bob could tell, as soon as he saw an egg, which bird's egg it was ; he could find all the wasps' nests ; he could set all sorts of traps ; he could climb trees like a squirrel ; he had almost a magical power of detecting hedgehogs and stoats ; and he had the courage to do things that were rather naughty, such as making gaps in the hedgerows, throwing stones after the sheep, and killing a cat that was wandering about. On account of his liking for Bob's company, Tom had given him a pocket-knife as a present. But, one day when Bob tried to cheat Tom, Tom grew furious and fought with him. After this fight, the relations between Tom and Bob came to an end till, several years later, when Tom's father had ruined himself, Bob suddenly appeared one day.

Offered financial help to Tom : Having heard of the misfortune of the Tulliver family, Bob called on Tom. He told Tom that for two years he had been working as a bargeman but had got tired of the job. He had thought of several other trades including rat-catching, and had decided to become a packman. He said that he had got ten pounds as a reward for extinguishing a fire at a mill. He offered nine pounds as financial help to Tom in the latter's family difficulties. Bob said that he still had the pocket knife that Tom had given him. Bob, as a return for that gift, wanted to do a good turn to Tom by giving him some money. Tom thanked Bob for Bob's kindness but declined to accept the money.

Was very talkative : Bob had a glib tongue. He would go on talking endlessly, mixing up all kinds of details about various matters. He used to talk with "unembarrassed loquacity". Indeed, his talk is most amusing. He chose the profession of a packman because he said that his tongue would help him with his women customers. Indeed, he proved to be a very skilful and shrewd packman. The manner in which he tackled the suspicious Mrs. Glegg and managed to sell some of his wares to her does him credit. Mrs. Glegg had a lot of prejudice against travelling packmen, but he talked to her in such a plausible manner by arousing her curiosity about his wares and by tickling her vanity that she could not resist him. Bob called himself a spirited chap, which he really was. He called himself a lucky fellow and believed that soon there might be another fire to extinguish and that he might get some more money as a reward just as he had got on the previous occasion.

His friendly interest in Tom and Maggie : Bob was a kind-hearted man and he wanted to do for Tom whatever he could. It was he who suggested to Tom a scheme whereby Tom could make some money. The scheme consisted in exporting certain goods through a sailor-friend. The scheme was successful and Tom made enough money to be able to pay off his father's debts. Bob was devoted to Maggie also. Indeed, he was an admirer of hers. Maggie told him that he was the kindest person in the world. And he told his mother that Maggie had "such uncommon eyes, they looked somehow as they made him feel nohow." He gave to Maggie a present of books. These books included one by Thomas a Kempis, which greatly influenced Maggie's mind. Bob also offered to give a pup to Maggie so that she might have a companion in her loneliness though Maggie did not accept this offer. When Maggie was without a home, he allowed her to live in his house. Earlier, Tom had been living in Bob Jakin's house.

Did not mind a little cheating : As a packman, Bob believed that a little cheating did not do much harm to anyone. A little cheating was, in his opinion, just like a fleabite and he said that there was no law against fleabites.

He had an extremely large thumb and this enabled him to measure out cloth in such a way as to give to the customer a little less than the customer paid for. He believed that to cheat miserly women who haggled and haggled over a bargain was exactly what they deserved. Mrs. Glegg, he found, was of this category.

His role in the novel: Bob Jakin is not an important character so far as the plot of the novel is concerned. He does not contribute much to the story except by unfolding to Tom a scheme for making money and rendering whatever friendly help he could to both Tom and Maggie. Thus he is a subsidiary character in the novel. But he is one of the principal sources of humour. His talk, rambling as it is, is most amusing. We cannot help smiling at several speeches that he makes in the book. Whether he is talking to Maggie or to Mrs. Glegg or to anyone else, he is never at a loss for words. We are amused by his way of inducing customers to buy his wares. We are amused by the way he used his big thumb to cheat his haggling women customers. His talk is, indeed, very spicy. One of his objections against marrying was that his dog Mumps might not like it, though he felt that he had money enough to get married. Subsequently, of course, Bob did get married. Apart from contributing to the humour of the novel, Bob Jakin lends a certain variety to the portrayal of human nature and human character in the book. He is a part of the social environment within which the principal characters move and act. Bob's nature and his spirit of service make him an eminently likable person, in spite of a little bit of cheating in which he indulged. Without Bob Jakin, the novel would certainly lose something in its sweep and variety. Bob is a part of that omnihumanity which this novel mirrors before us.

11. Aunts and Uncles in this Novel

The aunts and uncles in the story of *The Mill On The Floss* are Mr. and Mrs. Glegg, Mr. and Mrs. Pullet, Mr. and Mrs. Deane and Mr. and Mrs. Moss. Mrs. Glegg, Mrs. Pullet and Mrs. Deane were the sisters of Mrs. Tulliver, while Mrs. Moss was the sister of Mr. Tulliver. Uncles and aunts in this

novel form an interesting group because of their peculiarities. Each member of this group has been sharply distinguished from others.

Mrs. Glegg : her habit of finding fault with others : Mrs. Glegg was a woman of fifty. She was the eldest of the Dodson sisters. She had a very comely face and figure. But she had a bad temper. On account of her bad temper, Tom and Maggie considered their aunt Glegg as the type of ugliness. Mr. Glegg had a habit of finding fault with everyone and criticizing everything. When she spoke to Tom and Maggie, she did so in a loud, emphatic voice, as if she considered them deaf or perhaps rather idiotic. She thought both these children as having been spoiled. So she spoke to them in a sharp tone as if to put a check on their naughty tendencies. Mrs. Glegg often criticized Mrs Tulliver also. Not being fond of fashionable clothes, she disapproved of the way in which Mrs. Tulliver dressed herself. She often rebuked her sister, Mrs. Pullet, for unnecessarily crying and shedding tears over trifles, but here the rebuke was fully deserved.

Her quarrel with Mr. Tulliver : Mrs. Glegg disapproved of Mr. Tulliver's plan to send Tom to King's Lorton to be educated by Mr. Stelling on the ground that the expenses of that education would be above the means of Mr. Tulliver. But Mr. Tulliver stuck to his proposal at which Mrs. Glegg lost her temper and reminded Mr. Tulliver of the five hundred pounds that he owed to her. She left Mr. Tulliver's house in a huff. She then quarrelled with her husband for not having actively taken her side in the dispute with Mr. Tulliver. Indeed, she was a bullying type of woman and fully dominated her husband. When Mr. Tulliver reduced himself to bankruptcy through litigation, Mrs. Glegg was quite blunt in expressing her unfavourable opinion about Mr. Tulliver. She spoke to her sister Mrs Tulliver on this occasion in a patronizing tone as she had always done before. Indeed, she was quite callous in her approach to the whole situation. For instance, she was very harsh in saying that Tom had to bear the fruits of his father's misdeeds and that he must get ready to work hard. She added that Tom must be humble and grateful to his aunts and uncles for what they were doing

for his mother and father who, without that help, would have been turned out into the streets and would have gone to the work-house. Mrs. Glegg went on to say that Maggie must also make up her mind to be humble and to work and that she must respect and honour her aunts who had done so much for her and who had decided to leave money to their nephews and nieces in the form of legacies. She became even more unpleasant by saying that it was a disgrace for her sister, Bessy, to have married a man like Mr. Tulliver who had brought her to a state of beggary. In short, Mrs. Glegg made the most adverse comments upon the Tulliver family without in the least doing anything substantial to relieve their distress.

Her excellent principles : It must, however, be admitted that in spite of all her harshness and bad temper, Mrs. Glegg had certain excellent principles. Even though she quarrelled with Mr. Tulliver, she did not make any change in her will according to which she was to leave a certain amount of money to Tom and Maggie. In other words, she allowed the legacies to remain intact. It is true that she did not part with any cash to the Tulliver family during her life-time even though cash was badly needed by them. But she did not deprive Tom and Maggie of the legacies which she had decided to leave them. Another principle of Mrs. Glegg was that one should stand by one's kinsfolk. She rebuked Tom for having refused entry to Maggie into his house when Maggie returned from her misadventure with Stephen. Mrs. Glegg had deep-rooted ideas of clanship. She even quarrelled with her husband for his harsh judgment of Maggie on this occasion. Mrs. Glegg agreed that Maggie ought to be punished ; but she said that Maggie should be punished in proportion to the misdeeds *proved* against her, not in proportion to the misdeeds which were merely attributed to her by people outside her own family. She even offered Maggie a shelter in her house, although Maggie's pride did not permit her to accept this offer.

Aunt Pullet : unhelpful to the Tulliver family ; tearful ; had to take a variety to medicines : Mrs. Pullet was the second of the Dodson sisters. In her general attitude towards the Tulliver family in the latter's distress, she was not very different from Mrs. Glegg. For instance, she fully agreed with Mrs.

Glegg that no financial help in the form of hard cash should be given to the Tulliver family in their hour of crisis. But there was certainly a greater understanding between her and Mrs. Tulliver. They both had an unfavourable opinion about their eldest sister, Mrs. Glegg. Mrs. Pullet was a tearful woman always ready to shed tears over the misfortunes of other people or over the deaths of acquaintances or neighbours. She was even ready to shed tears if her toilet glass got broken. She was an invalid and had to take a variety of medicines. She possessed an exhaustive knowledge of the ailments of other people and talked glibly about those ailments. Mrs. Glegg would often rebuke her for her habit of fretting and crying about people with whom she had no relationship. But Mrs. Pullet thought her capacity to cry over the misfortunes of her neighbours a qualification rather than a fault. "Mrs. Pullet had married a gentleman farmer and had enough leisure and money to carry her crying and everything else to the highest pitch of respectability." She was almost proud of being under the doctor's hands most of the year. She had her pink mixture and white mixture, strong stuff in small bottles, and weak stuff in large bottles, her pills, her drops, her effervescing mixture, all which had to be administered to her by her husband. Mrs. Pullet believed that if one felt something wrong in one's system, one must consult a doctor; because otherwise what were doctors for? Mrs. Pullet's empty medicine bottles filled two long shelves in the store room, and it was her husband's ambition that at least one more shelf should be filled before she died. Her husband wanted to exhibit all those empty bottles after her death.

Almost childish: Indeed, there was something childish about Mrs. Pullet, apart from her frequent rehearsals of other people's illness, besides her own. For instance, she displayed a childish vanity in putting on her special bonnet and showing it to her sister, Mrs. Tulliver. She was proud of the fact that her husband had bought her a bonnet which was better than any bonnet that any other woman wore at Garum Church. When she showed this bonnet to her sister Mrs. Tulliver, she shook her head a good deal and, beginning to cry, she said, "Sister, if you should never see that bonnet again till I'm dead and gone, you'll remember I showed it to you this day."

Aunt Deane: Mrs. Deane was the third of the Dodson sisters. She was the thinnest and sallowest of all the Miss Dodsons. She had a daughter called Lucy. Lucy was a child of whom Mrs. Deane could certainly feel proud, because Lucy was so neat and pretty. Mrs. Deane was not particularly liked by her sister, Bessy. It was Bessy's view that her sister Deane was "as jealous and hating as can be", and that she was always trying to make the worst of Bessy's children to their aunts and uncles. In other words, Mrs. Deane had the habit of disparaging Bessy's children in order to establish the superiority of her own daughter, Lucy. Mrs. Deane had married a man who, by dint of his hard work and industry, had been made a junior partner in a wealthy firm of which he had been an employee. She was held to have made the worst match of all the Dodson sisters; but when her husband was taken as a partner in the firm in which he had been employed, people began to say that Mrs. Deane would one day ride in a better carriage and live in a better house than her sister Mrs. Pullet could afford. Mrs. Deane was neither a bullying woman nor a sentimental one. In a quarrel, she tried to maintain a neutral attitude. She was not a woman to take part in a scene "where missiles were flying." "She was a thin-lipped woman, who made small well considered speeches on particular occasions, repeating them afterwards to her husband and asking him if she had not spoken very properly." Her increasing prosperity had caused a sort of coolness in her sisterly intercourse with Mrs. Glegg. Nor was she very sympathetic or helpful to Mrs. Tulliver in the latter's troubles. All the help that she could give to the Tulliver family at the time of their crisis was to offer to send jellies for Mr. Tulliver in case the doctor ordered jellies for him in his sickness. Of course, she made an offer to buy some of the things from Mrs. Tulliver at the time of the auction of Mr. Tulliver's household effects, but she did not mean it.

Uncle Glegg: If aunt Glegg is the most interesting person among the aunts, uncle Glegg is the most interesting among the uncles. Mr. Glegg had retired from active business as a wool-stapler and used to spend much of his time in his garden looking after the flowers and the vegetables. He was greatly interested in his discoveries in natural history, in finding that his piece of

garden-ground contained wonderful caterpillars, slugs, and insects, and noticing remarkable coincidence between these zoological phenomena and the great events of that time. Thus gardening was a hobby which occupied much of his time and much of his attention.

Besides gardening, there was another subject of meditation for Mr. Glegg. This was the "contrariness" of the female mind as exhibited by his wife. Indeed, the ureasonableness of his wife, in spite of his utmost efforts to keep her satisfied and pleased, was simply baffling to his mind. Mr. Glegg had married this woman because he had found her very thrifty and miserly, and because he was himself a man of money-getting and money-keeping habits. Mr. Glegg was a stingy person. He might feel deep sympathy for a widow whose furniture was being sold but he would not part with a five pound note to prevent the sale of that furniture, because a donation of five pounds would have seemed to him a mad kind of lavishness rather than charity. And Mr. Glegg was just as fond of saving other people's money as his own. Now Mrs. Glegg shared her husband's miserliness, and yet she constantly snapped at him and quarrelled with him. It was this bullying attitude of his wife, in spite of the identity between their fundamental ideas of life, that puzzled Mr. Glegg about the peculiarities of the female mind. Not only did he feel upset by his wife's quarrelling with him but also by her fault-finding with others, for instance, with Dolly, the servant, or with her brother-in-law, Mr. Tulliver. Mr. Glegg often allowed himslf to be bullied by his wife, but there were occasions when he could not suppress himself. He even became jocular sometimes at her cost. For instance, when Mrs. Glegg scolded him for not taking her side in the quarrel with Mr. Tulliver and remarked, "It's very unbecoming in a man of your age and belongings," Mr. Glegg replied, "What's unbecoming, Mrs. G. ? My new blue coat as I've got on ?" On another occasion, he said to her in a tone of mingled anger and irony, "You're like a tipsy man who thinks everybody has had too much but himself." Mr. Glegg was capable of occasionally hitting back his wife as when he said, "Did ever anybody hear the like in this parish ? A woman with everything provided for her, and allowed to keep her own money the same as if it was

settled on her, and with a gig new stuffed and lined at no end of expense, and provided for when I died beyond anything she could expect......to go on in this way, biting and snapping like a mad dog? It's beyond everything as God Almighty has made women so."

Uncle Pullet: About uncle Pullet, the authoress tells us that he had "a great natural faculty for ignorance." For instance, when Mr. Tulliver unfolded his plan about Tom's education, uncle Pullet was simply astonished by the proposal because he could not understand why a boy should be sent to a parson. He did not know that some of the parsons were the best teachers. Uncle Pullet belonged to that extinct class of British yeomen who paid high rates and taxes, went to church, and ate a particular dinner on Sundays, without knowing anything of the working of the British Constitution or the relationship of the church and the state. Uncle Pullet did not understand politics at all. He thought that the understanding of politics was a natural gift. Thus, when Mr. Tulliver and Mr. Deane on one occasion sat together and discussed their political views, uncle Pullet sat by and listened with twinkling eyes to those "high matters." Even Tom as a boy was aware of uncle Pullet's mental stupidity and thought him to be a "molly-coddle" and "a nincompoop". Uncle Pullet possessed a musical snuff-box of which he was very proud and which, indeed, was his chief claim to distinction. The possession of this musical snuff-box, indeed, saved uncle Pullet from being a complete nullity. Besides the possession of this snuff-box, uncle Pullet's character was distinguished by the fact that he kept a variety of lozenges and peppermint drops on his person. Whenever, at a loss for conversation with anyone he filled the gap by offering these delicacies to that person and by taking some himself. Besides lozenges and peppermint drops, he also kept a stock of small sweet-cakes under lock and key for his own private eating on wet days. Uncle Pullet's chief concern was to look after his wife who was an invalid and who had to take a variety of medicines. Uncle Pullet had developed a remarkable memory for medicines. He remembered the pills which he had to administer to his wife every night, the drops which were to be administered to her at 11 o'clock and at 4 o'clock and the

effervescing mixture when aggreeable. He was almost as proud as his wife of the fact that after the death of old Mrs. Sutton, the local doctor did not have any other regular patient like Mrs. Pullet. Uncle Pullet was keeping all the empty medicine-bottles on the store-room shelves. He did not sell any of them because he wanted people to see them all after the death of Mrs. Pullet. Uncle Pullet was as cautious in spending money as uncle Glegg. For instance, he did not mind what course the quarrel between Mr. Tulliver and Mrs. Glegg took as long as Mr- Tulliver did not apply to him for money. Mr. Pullet was nervous about his investments and he did not see how a man could have any security for his money unless he turned it into land. It must, however, be admitted that he did tip Tom when Tom visited him during the vacation.

Uncle Deane : Uncle Deane was a large but alert-looking man, with a type of physique to be seen in all ranks of English society. The authoress humorously says, "You may see noblemen like Mr. Deane, and you may see grocers or day-labourers like him." Mr. Deane had a silver snuff-box which had been given to him by the superior partners in the firm to which he belonged, at the time when they gave him a share in the business in acknowledgement of his valuable services as manager. The name of this firm was Mesers. Guest & Co. It was a large mill-owning and ship-owning firm with a banking concern attached. Mr. Deane was very proud of the fact that he had risen from the position of an employee of the firm to the status of a junior partner in that firm, by virtue of his hard work, industry and usefulness. He claimed that if he had risen to a superior status, it was because he had made himself fit for it. He had mastered accounts ; he could write a good hand ; he knew all about the articles that were shipped or unshipped at the wharf. And the advice he gave to his nephew, Tom was, "If you want to slip into a round hole, you must make a ball of yourself." Uncle Deane set much store by accounting, book-keeping and other clerical work and did not have much interest in the classics or in Euclid which, he thought, were absolutely irrelevant to business. Uncle Deane proved quite helpful to Tom, first by securing him a job in his

own firm and later by prevailing upon his firm to buy Dorlcote Mill from Wakem. He also secured for Tom a share in the profits of the firm. He did so not because Tom was his nephew but because Tom had rendered meritorious service to the firm. Unlike uncle Pullet, Mr. Deane was not averse to a political discussion. Mr. Tulliver liked few things better than a chat with Mr. Deane who, according to him, was the "knowingest" man of his acquaintance and who had a "ready causticity of tongue". Mr. Deane could talk about the Duke of Wellington's conduct in the Catholic Question and his conduct at the Battle of Waterloo ; he could talk about Blucher and the Persians ; and he could talk about the state of imports in the country.

Mr. and Mrs. Moss. Mrs. Moss was Mr. Tulliver's sister. She had made a poor match. Mr. Tulliver had felt very disappointed with her for having married a poor man. But Mrs. Moss was a very patient type of woman who had reconciled herself to poverty. Mr. and Mrs. Moss had a large number of children, Mrs. Moss being a prolific woman. Mrs. Moss had to look after eight children, two having died. Mrs. Moss believed that the poor people should not mind being snubbed by their superiors. Indeed, Mrs. Moss "did not take her stand on the equality of the human race." Mrs. Moss was the only aunt whom Maggie liked because in her home Maggie could behave in any way she liked and aunt Moss never scolded her. Mrs. Moss is a partly pathetic and partly comic character.

The role of the aunts and uncles in the story : The aunts and uncles are not essential for the development of the plot. But without them the novel would lose much of its interest. In the *first* place, the life of these aunts and uncles is the life of the English middle class families of that period. We get a very realistic picture of their conjugal life. Each couple has been distinguished from the other, thus lending a variety to the picture of the English family life. *Secondly*, the uncles and aunts contribute greatly to the humour of the novel. We are amused by the great interest they all pretended in the welfare of the Tulliver family without meaning to do anything substantial to relieve the distress of that family. They did not even buy the furniture, china and books of the Tulliver family when these articles were sold by auction. We are greatly

amused by the quarrelsome nature and the bullying nature of Mrs. Glegg. We are amused by the stinginess of Mr. Glegg and his meditations over the "contrariness" of the female mind as typified by his wife. Mrs. Pullet's sentimentality and her morbid interest in diseases coupled with her pride in the number of medicines she had to take are also a source of humour. Mr. Pullet is an interesting man, too. He had a "natural faculty for ignorance." His chief claim to distinction was his musical snuff box. He was very fond of lozenges and peppermint drops. Mrs. Moss was a prolific woman who "did not take her stand on the equality of the human race." Thus there is something amusing about each member of this group. *Thirdly*, the presence of aunts and uncles in this novel lends to it variety and breadth. The function of this group in the novel is to suggest to the reader the world at large, and to create in the reader a sense of the animated human environment in which the chief characters have their being. The uncles and aunts are minor characters but important minor characters. We might say that they play what is called a "chorus" part. George Eliot has skilfully suggested the human environment of this story, by peopling its background with small, significant, representative figures who have nothing to do with the main action. An uncle or aunt in this group may be good or bad or morally neutral, may be comic or pathetic or both ; but they are all human and real and convincing.

12. A Note on Minor Characters in this Novel

The minor characters in *The Mill On The Floss* are : Mr. and Mrs. Tulliver, Mr. and Mrs. Glegg, Mr. and Mrs. Pullet, Mr. and Mrs. Deane. Mr. and Mrs. Moss, Bob Jakin, Mr. Riley, Mr. Stelling, the lawyer Wakem, and Dr. Kenn. It is clear that we have got a large group of minor and subsidiary figures in the novel. And yet George Eliot has succeeded in distinguishing each from the others. These minor characters serve as the social environment in which the principal characters move and act. The minor characters also create in our mind an impression of the variety of human nature and the multiplicity of human life. As a critic has observed, there is no novelist, who can more skilfully suggest the human environment of a

story, by peopling its background with small, significant, representative figures who have nothing to do with the main action.

Apart from contributing to the social environment of the story, these characters are a source of considerable homour in the book. In drawing these characters, George Eliot got an opportunity to reveal her satirical gifts. The humour and satire in the portrayal of these minor characters greatly lighten the gloom of the main story. At the same time, the portrayal of these characters enables the readers to form some idea of the English family life of the middle and lower middle classes of the period to which the story relates.

The family life of *Mr. and Mrs. Tulliver* and the uncles and aunts is, indeed, very amusingly described. Mr. and Mrs. Tulliver could not agree on any matter. Each thought that the other came from an inferior family. Mr. Tulliver always acted in a manner contrary to the advice of his wife, generally spoke to her in a patronizing tone, and made no secret of his dislike for her sisters. Mrs. Tulliver was generally submissive to her husband, though she was very sensitive on the subject of her relations.

Mr. Glegg was often bullied by his wife, in spite of the fact that there was a fundamental identity of outlook between him and her, because both of them were miserly in the extreme degree. Indeed, Mr. Glegg often wondered at the unreasonableness of his wife and sometimes even snapped back at her. *Mr. and Mrs. Pullet* lived in great harmony with each other. Mr. Pullet's chief concern was to administer various medicines to his ailing wife at fixed hours. We are greatly amused by Mrs. Pullet's sentimentality and her readiness to shed tears, and by Mr. Pullet's "natual faculty for ignorance" and his pride in his musical snuff-box. *Mrs. Moss* was a prolific woman having given birth to ten children, two of whom had unfortunately died. She believed that poor people should not mind being snubbed. Indeed, she did not take her stand on the equality of the human race. *Mr. Deane* was a shrewd business man who had a dislike for learning and who had made his way up in life through sheer industry. In short, all members

of this group have been drawn with great gusto and relish by the novelist.

Bob Jakin is a master-piece of characterization. He is a very entertaining fellow because of his glib tongue, his large thumb, and his spicy talk. Mr. Riley was the auctioneer who advised Mr. Tulliver to send his son, Tom, for education to Mr. Stelling. *Mr. Stelling* was a priest under whom Tom and Philip studied. Mr. Stelling had his own theories about education. He believed that no education was complete without a thorough knowledge of the Classics and Geometry. George Eliot describes the educational theories of Mr. Stelling in a satirical manner. Lawyer *Wakem* was the man whom Mr. Tulliver hated the most. Mr. Tulliver attributed his ruin to Wakem. We are not shown much of Wakem, but in the scene between him and his son he shows his human side by agreeing to his son's request to sell Dorlcote Mill to Messrs. Guest & Co. *Dr. Kenn* was the vicar of St. Ogg's. He was a very kindly, benevolent, upright man who took Maggie's side when the whole town had turned against her. But people misunderstood his intentions towards Maggie and he had to break off his connection with her.

13. Female Characters *Versus* Male Characters

Leslie Stephen's view : Leslie Stephen, an eminent critic, thinks that George Eliot is more successful in portraying female characters than in portraying male characters. According to Leslie Stephen, the women of Geogre Eliot are unerringly drawn, while she does not have the same certainty of touch when she draws a man. George Eliot, says Leslie Stephen, convinces us at every point, of the insight and fidelity of her analysis of women but she is not at home in the "psychology of the male animal." *The Mill On The Floss*, according to this critic, amply proves the truth of his opinion.

The portrait of Maggie : There is no doubt that George Eliot's portrayal of Maggie Tulliver is a master-piece of female characterization. Of course, much of the success of this piece of characterization is due to the fact that George Eliot was recording her own experiences and revealing her own temperament. Maggie Tulliver,. by and large, is George Eliot herself.

The childhood sorrows of Maggie are most realistically and convincingly described, because they were George Eliot's own sorrows during childhood. But the subsequent phases of Maggie's life are described with equal success. Her falling in love with Philip, her secret meetings with him, the scene between her and her brother when she submits to his ban, the mental agony that she underwent after running away with Stephen, her decision to choose and follow the path of renunciation—all these are psychologically true. Of course, one does not understand how Maggie fell in love with a man of average qualities like Stephen. Probably we can explain this by saying that it was more of a physical passion than of any profound feeling of love. In any case, Maggie has been made to live before us. We are made to share her feelings, her conflicts, her mental agonies, etc. Maggie's deep and undying love for her brother, her love for Philip, her affection for Lucy, and even her physical passion for Stephen contribute towards the creation of a living and convincing personality.

Other feminine portraits : Equally convincing and successful are George Eliot's portrayals, though brief, of other women in the novel—Lucy with her prettiness, culture and refinement, gentleness and sympathy ; Mrs. Tulliver with her strong family pride, her general submissiveness to her husband, her fuss over her linen and china ; Mrs. Glegg with her bullying and domineering nature and her unreasonablness ; Mrs. Pullet with her sentimental and morbid interest in diseases—all these women are made to live before us and are examples of George Eliot's thorough understanding of female psychology.

Characterization of men—Mr. Tulliver, Tom, Uncles, Bob : When we travel to the male figures in the novel, we find that they are no less alive and convincing. For instance, the character and personality of Tom are convincingly drawn. He represents the self-willed type of man, who always thinks himself to be in the right and who makes a fetish of family honour thereby blinding himself to other considerations. Tom, of course, inherited his obstinacy and his hatred of the Wakem family from his father who is also very skilfully presented to us. Mr. Tulliver always claimed that the family from which

he came was superior to the Dodson family from which his wife came. He always spoke to his wife from a higher level except when he had ruined himself through litigation. To him, the world was a "puzzling place", a place not fit for an honest man. The uncles, though their appearances in the novel are very brief, are yet memorable figures. How can we forget Mr. Glegg who did not understand his wife's bullying of him in spite of a fundamental identity of outlook between him and her in being economical to the point of miserliness? How, again, can we forget Mr. Pullet with his great concern for his wife's health, with his "natural faculty for ignorance", with his musical snuff-box, his lozenges and his peppermints? Mr. Deane, with his business acumen and his distaste for learning, is no less skilfully drawn. Bob Jakin is, indeed, a masterly creation. This young man had a glib tongue and talked with "unembarrassed loquacity". Indeed, his talk is most spicy and entertaining.

Philip and Stephen : The character of Philip Wakem has also been drawn with a sureness of touch. A hunch-back with literary and artistic tastes, this young man craved for companionship and sympathy. He was interested in literature, in music, in drawing, and yet he felt a want of direction in his life. He suffered deeply because of his love for Maggie. It is not possible for us to point out any fault in the portrayal of Philip. It is when we come to the portrayal of Stephen Guest that some doubt arises in our minds. Stephen Guest was a shallow young man, a man with no more than average intelligence, a man with nothing exceptional about him except his wealth and status. Leslie Stephen thinks it a flaw in the characterization of Stephen Guest that a girl like Maggie should have fallen in love with him. But the novelist's intention here seems to be to show how an impulsive and passionate girl, long starved emotionally and physically, can be sexually drawn towards a handsome, fashionable, aristocratic young man. The attraction here is purely sensual so far as Maggie is concerned. There is no doubt that, if Maggie had married Stephen, she would soon have discovered his mediocrity and would have probably repented of the marriage. If we adopt this line of argument, then the critic's charge against Georg

Eliot seems baseless. Our critic expresses the view that George Eliot herself does not understand what a "mere hair-dresser's block" she was describing in Mr. Stephen Guest and this critic considers it as an example of George Eliot's incapacity for portraying the male sex. But it is not possible for us to agree with the critic's judgment. George Eliot knew that she was describing a mere hair-dresser's block in Stephen Guest. What she wanted to show was that it is possible for a girl like Maggie to be *sensually* attracted towards a man like Stephen, *under certain circumstances.*

V. THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL CHARACTER OF *THE MILL ON THE FLOSS*

*It is an accepted fact that in writing *The Mill On The Floss*, George Eliot took herself for a heroine. *The Mill On The Floss* is markedly an autobiographical novel. Maggie Tulliver is no other than Mary Ann Evans (the real name of George Eliot). There is hardly any other autobiographical novel in English which gives us such a vivid and direct representation of the writer's most intimate characteristics. But it must not be supposed that the entire history of Maggie Tulliver is the life story of George Eliot. It is mainly the first two volumes of the novel which are a sort of spiritual autobiography of Mary Ann Evans.

The facts of the life of Mary Ann : Marry Ann was the youngest child in her family. She had an elder brother called Isaac, and an elder sister, Christiana. The youngest child in such a family sometimes feels anxiously that there is no one left for her. Father and mother love each other, the elder brother and elder sister are already playmates. Consequently, Mary Ann experienced a passionate longing for someone who could belong to her completely, someone who would regard her as the centre of his affection. She craved, above all, for the whole love of her brother, Isaac. But she was disappointed because Isaac at the age of eight years went to school and used to return only for the holidays. Isaac was often impatient

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**The present writer owes some of the material in this portion to Lettice Cooper.*

with Mary Ann because she could not walk long distances, could not climb high enough, and cried too easily. Her father was especially fond of her, but there was no one who could belong to her completely. Mary Ann had certain minor troubles also. While she was plain and untidy, her sister Christiana was pretty and neat. Christiana was a favourite with the grown-up people and was thought to be a good girl who was useful in the house, and was, therefore, approved by her mother. Mary Ann had unmanageable hair and did not show much inclination to help her mother in the household work. When Mary Ann grew up and took to writing she adopted the pen-name of George Eliot. She fell in love with a man called, George Henry Lewes. Lewes was a married man, but he was living apart from his wife and children. Mary Ann's family respectability did not permit her to develop an intimacy with Lewes. But her love for him was so passionate that she overcame all moral scruples and began to live with Lewes as his unmarried wife.

The facts of the life of Maggie : The above brief sketch of some of the circumstances of the life of Mary Ann clearly shows the resemblance between the experiences of Maggie and the experiences of Maggie's creator. Like Mary Ann, Maggie was deeply attached to her brother who did not much care for her. Like Mary Ann, Maggie was the favourite of her father though not much liked by her mother. Mary Ann had a sister who was more tidy and more pretty ; Maggie had a cousin, Lucy, who was likewise more tidy and more pretty. The early sufferings of Maggie are a true record of the early sufferings of Mary Ann. That is the reason why George Eliot has devoted a large portion of the novel to an account of the early life of Maggie and Tom. Besides, George Eliot has put a lot of feeling and earnestness into the writing of this account. Some critics go so far as to say that even Maggie's love-affair with Stephen who was originally a lover of Lucy has been based upon George Eliot's illegal love-affair with George Henry Lewes. The only difference between these two love-affairs is that while Maggie renounced a lover who did not legitimately belong to her, George Eliot lived happily with a lover who did not legitimately belong to her.

Minor details : A few minor details in the novel also

contribute to its autobiographical character. The external circumstances of the story have been altered but George Eliot's native district still supplies the details. The round pool to which she had gone on fishing expeditions with her brother, and the Red Deeps which had been her favourite haunt have been transported from her native place to the region near St. Ogg's. The attic to which Maggie used to retire to sob and weep was the attic to which George Eliot had retired in her father's house.

VI. *THE MILL ON THE FLOSS* AS A PICTURE OF THE SUFFERINGS OF A CHILD

The sorrows of Maggie : It has rightly been observed that *The Mill On the Floss* contains a vivid and touching picture of the sufferings of a child. This child is no other than Maggie who is doubtless the heroine of the novel. Book I which is the longest of all the books of this novel and which constitutes one-fourth of the entire novel has been devoted to a description of the childhood of Tom and Maggie, but of Maggie in particular. Maggie's sorrows and sufferings as a child have been described by George Eliot with great feeling. There is a lot of poignancy in this description of Maggie's suffering. Much of Maggie's suffering was George Eliot's own experience as a child in her father's home. The autobiographical character of Maggie's suffering lends it an additional interest.

The constant scolding by Mrs. Tulliver : Maggie as a child suffered anguish for various reasons. She was constantly scolded by her mother who thought her to be a naughty and spoiled child. Her mother never had a word of approval or affection for her. She always depreciated the child and exaggerated her faults. She felt irritated by Maggie's unmanageable hair and by Maggie's brown skin. She felt annoyed with Maggie for going to play by the river-side. Indeed, where Maggie was concerned Mrs. Tulliver always grumbled and growled. It was in a mood of rebelliousness against her mother that Maggie took the drastic act of cutting her hair with a large pair of scissors. Subsequently she sobbed and wept a good deal over what she had done because with the hair cut short she looked ridiculous. After having cut the hair, "she

sat as helpless and despairing among her black locks as Ajax among the slaughtered sheep." It is in this connection that the novelist dwells upon the intensity of the griefs of children, which grown-up people are prone to make light of. The suffering of a child is generally caused by trivial things. But though the causes of their griefs are trivial, the griefs are bitter and intense.

The harshness of uncles and aunts: Maggie's uncles and aunts, with the exception of Mrs. Moss, were most unkind and rough to her. Aunt Glegg was particularly severe to her. Aunt Pullet was no less severe. Her cousin Lucy was praised by everyone. This habitual depreciation of Maggie by aunts and uncles and their approbation of Lucy greatly distressed Maggie.

The indifference and callousness of Tom: The principal cause of Maggie's suffering, however, was the indifference and callousness of her brother, Tom. She was deeply attached to Tom and she craved for his love. Tom, by the very nature of his temperament, could not show the same deep affection to Maggie which she showed towards him. Indeed, Maggie felt emotionally starved because her craving for Tom's love was not fulfilled. Tom would get annoyed with her for little faults and that made her miserable. She was always trying to appease and soothe Tom. Whenever he felt annoyed with her, she apologized to him. When Tom was angry with her for having neglected to look after his rabbits, she was deeply grieved. She knew that she was naughty to her mother but she had never been naughty to Tom. When Tom told her that he would not take her with him for fishing, she felt greatly injured and said, "Oh Tom, please forgive me—I cannot bear it—I will always be good—do love me—please, dear Tom." When, on one occasion, Tom showed a preference for Lucy's company, Maggie got so jealous that she pushed Lucy into mud. Then feeling miserable at Tom's annoyance with her, she ran away to the gypsies. Among the gypsies she felt even more miserable till she was restored to her father. Commenting upon Maggie's suffering as a child, George Eliot observes, "These bitter sorrows of childhood! when sorrow is new and strange, when hope has not yet got wings to fly beyond the

days and weeks and the space from summer to summer seems measureless."

VII. *THE MILL ON THE FLOSS* AS A PICTURE OF ENGLISH FAMILY LIFE

The Mill On The Floss is, of course, chiefly the story of Maggie and Tom. But the novel does not depend only on Maggie and Tom. The novel contains, besides, a remarkably realistic picture of English family life. And, of course, we have a lot of humour and shrewd observation in George Eliot's portrayal of that life.

The family life of the Tullivers : The family life of the Tullivers is described in detail. The relations of Mr. and Mrs. Tulliver, the attitude of the two parents towards their two children and the relations of Tom and Maggie are given to us at great length. Mr. Tulliver had better brains than his wife. Therefore, he usually spoke to her in a patronizing manner and from a higher level. He did not feel any respect for his wife or her family. Indeed, he was frankly contemptuous of his wife's sisters. Mrs. Tulliver was a submissive wife except when her husband criticized her kinsfolk whom she always defended with great energy. Mrs. Tulliver was a woman of little personality, but as the representative of the Dodson family she had an authority which her husband could not always resist. Mr. Tulliver was very fond of his daughter, Maggie, because she took after his family. Mrs. Tulliver, on the contrary, always criticised Maggie and was more fond of the son, Tom, because Tom was supposed to have taken after his mother's family. The wide difference between Mr. Tulliver and his wife can best be indicated by pointing out that, whenever Mrs. Tulliver offered any advice to her husband, he acted in a manner contrary to it. The novelist has devoted considerable space to an account of the relations between Tom and Maggie. Maggie always longed for Tom's love but did not get it. Tom was rather harsh towards her. Tom's indifference always made Maggie very miserable.

The family life of the Gleggs : An interesting picture of the family life of Mr. and Mrs. Glegg has been painted by the

novelist. Mr. Glegg was a very miserly man. He had married Mrs. Glegg precisely because he found her as miserly as he himself. But in spite of this common trait between them, they did not get on well together. Mrs. Glegg always tried to dominate and bully her husband. Mr. Glegg often wondered at the unreasonableness of his wife and he came to the conclusion that all women must be unreasonable. He endured his wife's bullying as patiently as he could but sometimes he also snapped at her. Indeed, the family life or Mr. and Mrs. Glegg has been described by George Eliot in a most amusing manner.

The family life of Pullets : Equally amusing is George Eliot's account of the family life of Mr. and Mrs. Pullet. Mrs. Pullet was an ailing weman who had to take a variety of medicines. She was proud of the fact that she took so many medicines resulting in a large number of empty medicine bottles having accumulated in the house. Mrs. Pullet was an over-sentimental woman, always ready to shed tears over the misfortunes of other people and over the death of a neighbour or an acquaintance. The chief concern of Mr. Pullet was to look after his wife and administer to her the various medicines at the right times. Mr. Pullet did not wish to sell the empty medicine bottles because he wanted to exhibit them after his wife's death. Mr. Pullet, we are told, had a "natural faculty for ignorance"—which is a pungently satirical phrase used by the novelist.

The behaviour of aunts and uncles towards the Tulliver family : A most interesting and yet perfectly realistic picture of the attitudes of the various aunts and uncles towards the Tulliver family has been given by the novelist. The aunts and uncles pretended great solicitude for the welfare of the Tulliver family but none of them did anything substantial to relieve the financial distress of that family. It is very amusing to read about the patronising attitude with which the aunts and uncles, especially Mr. Glegg, talked without really meaning to do anything to help the Tullivers in their hour of crisis. The uncles and aunts did not even buy the china and linen at the time of the auction, in spite of the fact that Mrs. Tulliver had indulged

in a lot of sentimental talk about her attachment to her household effects and had appealed to her sisters not to allow the articles to pass into the hands of strangers. Tom and Maggie were justified in flaring up on one occasion when the aunts and uncles were in council discussing the affairs of the Tulliver family without offering any financial help in the form of cash and yet pretending as if they were the anxious guardians of that family.

Other pictures of family life : We also get a picture of the family life of Mr. and Mrs. Deane and their daughter, Lucy. Lucy was the darling not only of her parents but of her uncles and aunts. Mr. and Mrs. Deane lived a life of complete harmony. Mrs. Deane was proud of the fact that her husband had risen from a humble position to the position of a junior partner in a large firm. A brief account of the life of Mr. and Mrs. Moss is also given to us. Mrs. Moss was a prolific woman who had given birth to ten children, two of them having died to the great sorrow of Mrs. Moss. Mrs. Moss believed that the poor should not mind if they were snubbed by their betters. As the novelist tells us, Mrs. Moss "did not take her stand on the equality of the human race." Mrs. Moss had married a poor husband but she was devoted to him as well as to her children. Glimpses of the aristocratic life of the Guest family, of the life of the vicar, Dr. Kenn, and his wife, and of the family of Bob Jakin are also given to us and contribute to the interest of the novel. The narration of the story is interspersed with George Eliot's personal comments and observations which are often very shrewed and which show a penetrating knowledge of human nature and human psychology. Again and again, the story halts to enable the novelist to comment upon the actions of the characters or upon the working of the human mind.

VIII. PATHOS IN *THE MILL ON THE FLOSS*

The Mill On The Floss tells a very moving and pathetic story. There is, undoubtedly, plenty of comedy in this novel, but the general atmosphere and the total emotional effect upon the reader are very dark, gloomy, and depressing. A pessimistic picture of human life has been painted in this

book. There are a number of scenes and situations which are deeply poignant.

Sufferings of the Tulliver family : *The Mill On The Floss* is the story of the sufferings of the Tulliver family, and especially of Maggie Tulliver. Mr. Tulliver ruined himself through litigation and was reduced to bankruptcy. The shock of this misfortune brought on him a stroke of paralysis. He did recover from his illness and even managed, with the help of his son Tom, to pay off his debts ; but having assaulted his enemy, Wakem, died of the excitement of the fight. The scene in which he apologized to his wife for having brought the family to ruin and the manner in which he agreed to work as an employee of Wakem are very touching. "You may do as you like with me, Bessy," he said to his wife, "I have been the bringing of you to poverty...... this world's is too many for me.........I'm nought but a bankrupt. It's no use standing up for anything now." Mr. Tulliver's dying words were also full of grief and anguish. He exhorted his son to look after his mother and sister and then mumbled, "This word's......too many......honest man......puzzling...... ....'' Mrs. Tulliver's groaning and sobbing at the threatened sale of her linen and china by auction is also pathetic though there is a touch of comedy in it too. Tom's desperate efforts to make enough money so as to pay off his father's debts and the hard work that he had to do in order to attain this object are also a painful aspect of human existence. Tom's family anxieties were greatly aggravated first on his discovering that his sister had been meeting Philip secretly and later on finding that his sister had run away with Stephen.

Sorrows of Maggie : But it is the suffering of Maggie from her childhood onwards that constitutes the real substance of the novel. As a child Maggie suffered on account of the constant scolding of her mother, the harshness and unkindness of her uncles and aunts, and the indifference and callousness of Tom. As a grown-up girl she suffered first becaus her love-affair with Philip led to nothing but trouble with Tom, and then because her love-affair with Stephen led to nothing but public disgrace. Maggie's conflict between marrying Stephen and renouncing him was the most tormenting and agonizing experience of her life. Her decision to sacrifice

her happiness for the sake of others was in itself heart-breaking. The climax of the tragedy in the novel comes, of course, with the drowning of Tom and Maggie in the flood.

Other tragic elements : Besides the above tragic elements in the novel, we have the distress of the Moss family, the persistent ailments of Mrs. Pullet, and the unbearable pain that Lucy endured when she learnt that her lover had run away with her cousin, Maggie. The economic plight of Mr. and Mrs. Moss with their eight children is a familiar fact of human existence, but not the less tragic for that reason. Mrs. Pullet's ailments would excite our sympathy if she were not so proud of the large number of ailments that she suffered from as also of the large number of medicines that she had to take. The pain that Lucy suffered was completely undeserved. The sad fate of Philip Wakem is also a tragic element in the story. Philip was a hunch-back. He was a sensitive man with literary and artistic tastes. His love for Maggie was deep, enduring and sincere. But he suffered a complete frustration in his love because of the unreasonableness of Tom who could never tolerate the marriage of his sister to Philip. Philip never forgot Maggie. After Maggie's death he used to spend much of his time alone in the Red Deeps where he had previously spent the golden hours of his life in the company of Maggie.

The hand of fate : Thus we find that this novel contains several aspects of the pathos and tragedy of human existence. We have the suffering caused by economic reasons ; we have the sufferings and sorrows of childhood ; we have the hypocrisy and unhelpfulness of uncle and aunts ; and, above all, we have emotional conflicts, emotional frustrations, emotional despair. Nor is the cruel hand of fate wanting to crown the tragedy of human existence by bringing about a flood in which the two principal characters of the novel were drowned.

IX. HUMOUR IN *THE MILL ON THE FLOSS*

Plenty of humour in *The Mill On The Floss* : Although the novel is on the whole serious and tragic, yet there is a considerable element of humour in it. This humour is chiefly provided by the uncles and aunts and by Bob Jakin.

Uncles and aunts: The uncles and aunts form a very amusing group. They all pretended a great anxiety about the affairs of the Tulliver family and a great interest in the welfare of that family, but did nothing substantial to relieve the distress of the ruined family. The contrast between their pretensions and their failure to live up to these pretensions is quite amusing. They failed to buy even the household effects of the Tullivers when these were put on sale by auction in spite of the fact that Mrs. Tulliver had appealed to her sisters not to allow her linen and china to go into the hands of strangers. The individual members of this group are also amusing because of their peculiarities. **Mrs. Glegg,** the bullying woman, disapproving of everybody and of everything, amuses us a good deal. Her agreeing to lend some money to Tom to be invested in business on condition that she was given an adequate return on her investment and yet talking as if she was doing a favour to Tom is quite comic. **Mr. Glegg** is funny because of his money-getting habits and because he married Mrs. Glegg for her thrifty temperament. He could never understand why his wife bullied him in spite of his efforts to keep her satisfied and pleased. The unreasonableness of his wife was to him typical of the "contrariness" of the feminine mind. Sometimes he snapped back at his wife. For instance, on one occasion he said to her, "You are like a tipsy man who thinks that everybody has had too much but himself." **Mr. and Mrs. Pullet** are also very amusing. Mrs. Pullet was always ready to shed tears over the misfortunes of others and over the deaths of neighbours and acquaintances. She suffered from various ailments and was almost proud of the number of medicines she had to take. She was almost childish in her vanity about her bonnet which she showed to her sister, Mrs. Tulliver with the following profound observation. "Sister, if you should never see that bonnet again till I am dead and gone you'll remember I showed it to you this day." Mr. Pullet's chief concern was looking after his wife. He had developed a remarkable memory for medicines. He remembered the various medicines he had to administer to his wife at different hours. He was keeping all the empty medicine bottles on the store-room shelves because he wanted people to see those bottles after the death of his wife. We are also amused when

the novelist tells us that Mr. Pullet had "a natural faculty for ignorance." Mr. Pullet's chief claim to distinction was a musical snuff-box of which he was very proud. Tom thought this uncle a "molly-coddle." **Mrs. Moss** is a pathetic woman but there is a comic side even to her. She had eight living children and yet she was very sorry that the twins to whom she had given birth had not survived. Mrs. Moss was of a very humble nature. She believed that people who were poor should be prepared to receive snubs. She did not take her stand on the equality of the human race. She was a patient, prolific, loving-hearted woman.

Bob Jakin as a source of humour : Bob Jakin provides a lot of humour in the novel. He used to talk with "unembarrassed loquacity." Indeed, his talk, full of all kinds of details about various matters unconnected with the subject in hand, is very funny. He became a packman because he knew that his glib tongue would help him greatly with his haggling women customers. He proved his skill in salesmanship by the amusing manner in which he prevailded upon Mrs. Glegg to buy some of his wares. The way in which he used his thumb to cheat his customers is also very funny. Having made some money he felt that he should marry but then it occurred to him that wives were a big botheration and that his dog Mumps might not like his wife.

The conjugal life of Mr. and Mrs. Tulliver : The conjugal life of Mr. and Mrs. Tulliver is also one of the sources of humour in the book. Mr. Tulliver always talked to his wife from a higher level. He allowed no opportunity to pass without making it clear to his wife that she was not only inferior to him but that her family was inferior to his family. Mrs. Tulliver allowed herself to be dominated by her husband but there were occasions on which she stood up against him. We are amused when we are told that whenever Mrs. Tulliver gave any advice to her husband, her husband acted in a manner contrary to that advice. "She had a facility of saying things which drove him in the opposite direction to the one she desired."

Casual humorous observations : In addition to the humour of character which has been described above, there are a large

number of casual humorous remarks and observations which the authoress makes in the course of the narration of the story. To take a couple of examples: "Our friend Mr. Tulliver had a good-natured fibre in him, and did not like to give harsh refusals even to his sister, *who had not only come into the world in that superfluous way characteristic of sisters, creating a necessity for mortgages,* but had quite thrown herself away in marriage, and had crowned her mistakes by having an eighth baby." Again, "Mr. Tulliver did not willingly write a letter, and found the relations between spoken and written language, briefly known as spelling, one of the most puzzling things in this puzzling world." And again, "Maggie was growing with a rapidity which her aunts considered highly reprehensible."

X. THE SYMBOLIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RIVER FLOSS

Geroge Eliot has described the river Floss as the great river which "flows for ever onward and links the small pulse of the old English farms with the beatings of the world's mighty heart." The river suggests a larger dimension than the Dodsons and the Tullivers were accustomed to move in. Soon the river becomes a symbol of those ungoverned impulses and vague, profound aspirations which bore Maggie to her doom. The river, too, carries us away from convention. Besides, some of the references to the river provide what is known as "tragic irony" in the story. In the very first pages of the book comes the following remark by Mrs. Tulliver about Maggie, "And now to put me in mind; I do not know where she is now. Ah! I thought so.........wandering up and down by the water, like a wild thing: she 'll tumble in some day." On at least two other occasions, Mrs. Tulliver was to express this same fear, namely, that Maggie would get drowned in the river. Thus the river gradually becomes the symbol of disaster, streaking its way through the sunny landscape of Maggie's adolescent hope. At Christmas, "snow lay on the croft and river-bank in undulations softer than the limbs of infancy, there was no gleam, no shadow, for the heavens, too, were one still, pale cloud..... no sound or motion in anything *but the dark river that flowed and moaned like an unresting sorrow.*

There was an old story that when the mill changed hands the river was angry. The river smiles only when it is seen as the symbol of Maggie's supreme temptation. It was on the river, with Lucy, that Stephen taught Maggie to row. And it was the river, now all one with Maggie's unbridled impulses which bore the lovers to Mudport. Finally, it was the river which carried Tom and Maggie to their doom, uniting them after so much love and misunderstanding in the ultimate charity of death. Thus the river becomes a symbol of fate or destiny or a symbol of those mysterious forces which operate in human life to bring about unforseen and unpredictable results. The river and Maggie between them would seem to illustrate what may be called "a tragic sense of life." Beyond all the logic of psychological realism, George Eliot saw the mystery of fate, and the river is a visible and concrete embodiment of George Eliot's sense of that mystery of fate.

(*Note : This portion is based on the opinions expressed by Robert Speight*).

XI. A CRITICAL APPRECIATION OF *THE MILL ON THE FLOSS*

An autobiographical novel : In the writing of *The Mill On The Floss*, George Eliot drew most directly on her own early life. Maggie Tulliver, the sensitive, passionate child, craving for her brother's love, the inhibited girl growing up in a narrow world with a thirst for life, beauty, knowledge, is no other than the young Mary Ann Evans (George Eliot) herself. In other words, George Eliot took herself as a heroine in this novel and the first two volumes of the novel are a kind of spiritual autobiography. There is hardly any other autobiographical novel in English which gives us such a clear and direct picture of the writer's most intimate characteristics. The resemblance between the circumstances of the early life of George Eliot and the circumstances of the early life of Maggie Tulliver is quite obvious. The early sufferings of Maggie are a true record of the early sufferings of George Eliot. That is the reason why George Eliot has devoted a large portion of the novel to an account of the early life of Maggie and Tom. Besides, George

Eliot has put a lot of feeling and earnestness into the writing of this account. Some critics go so far as to say that even Maggie's love-affair with Stephen who was originally Lucy's lover has been based upon George Eliot's illegal love-affair with George Henry Lewes. The autobiographical character of this novel lends it, of course, an additional interest.

Plot construction : The plot of this novel is successfully constructed. The story possess a gripping interest and nowhere is it allowed to become tedious. The story moves rapidly enough. The first book is devosed to the early life of Maggie and Tom. The second book describes Tom's experiences at school and the beginning of an attachment between Maggie and Philip. The third book describes the bankruptcy of Mr. Tulliver and the misfortunes resulting therefrom. The fourth book which is the shortest of all describes Maggie's spiritual distress and her attainment of mental peace as a result of her study of the book by Thomas a Kempis. The fifth book develops the love-affair between Maggie and Philip leading to the quarrel between Tom and Maggie and Tom's stern injunctio that she should never meet Philip without his permission. The sixth book describes the love-affair between Maggie and Stephen, the mental agony and torment that she suffers, and her choosing the path of renunciation and self-sacrifice. The final book dea with Maggie's alienation from Tom as a result of her misadventure with Stephen, the reconciliation between brother and sister brought about by the flood, and their death by drowning. There is quite a large number of dramatic scenes in the course of the story. Memorable among them are the quarrel between Mr. Tulliver and Mrs. Glegg, the quarrel between Maggie and Tom followed by the quarrel between Tom and Philip, the assault on Wakem by Mr. Tulliver, the elopement of Maggie and Stephen and Stehen's passionate pleadings and entreaties, and the final rescue. It has, however, been pointed out by some critics that there is a certain disproportion in the telling of the story. It has been said that too much space has been devoted to the early life of Maggie and that the final end comes rather abruptly. There is certainly substance in this charge. But we should understand with George Eliot has devoted so much space to, and spent so much pains upon, the first book

because of its autobiographical character. As far the abruptness of the final end, hardly any defence can be put forward. The reader does experience a certain mental jerk because of the suddenness with which the calamity descends upon brother and sister.

Characterization : The various characters in the novel have been made to live before us. Not only the principal characters, but the minor characters also have been drawn successfully and convincingly. The portrait of Maggie Tulliver is unforgettable. Tom and Philip are delineated with great success. The portrayal of Mr. and Mrs. Tulliver, the uncles and aunts, and Bob Jakin shows the author's vast knowledge and deep understanding of human nature. Indeed, the range of characterization in the novel is quite surprising. It has been said by certain critics that George Eliot succeeds in her portrayal of women more than in her portrayal of male figures. If we take into consideration all the novels of George Eliot, we might agree with this opinion and say that on the whole, as was natural, George Eliot showed a greater understanding of the female mind than of male psychology. But so for as this particular novel is concerned, we find that her delineation of male characters is quite as successful as that of female characters. A flaw has been detected in the characterization of Stephen Guest. It has been said that a girl like Maggie could not have fallen in love with a man like Stephen Guest. But there is no real flaw. It seems to have been the author's intention to show that, under certain circumstances, a passionate, physically and emotionally starved girl like Maggie can be physically and sensually drawn towards a handsome, aristocratic, fashionable, mediocre young man.

A psychological novel : George Eliot is one of the pioneers in the field of psychological fiction. She attempted to do in prose fiction what Browning did in poetry. In other words, she describes not only the outward action of her characters but also the inner states of mind. *The Mill On The Floss* amply proves that. This novels describes not only the outward or external life of the principal characters but also their inner meditations, struggles, conflicts, etc. The inner conflicts and torments of Maggie have been fully described. Indeed, the

novel is more of a spiritual autobiography of Maggie than anything else. The inner life of Tom, Philip and Stephen has also been revealed. The meditations and the mental dilemma of even a minor character like Mr. Glegg have been faithfully recorded. Indeed, George Eliot shows a penetrating insight into the working of the human mind.

A realistic novel : The story of the novel is perfectly realistic and the characters are perfectly convincing. There is nothing improbable, nothing far-fetched in the story. The illusion of reality is created with conspicuous success. The characters are taken from real life and their mutual relations are perfectly true to human nature. The English family life of the time has been depicted in a simple manner. The family life of the Tullivers, the family life of the Gleggs, the family life of the Pullets, the behaviour of aunts and uncles towards the Tulliver family are all described in such a way as to give as a true picture of human nature and human relations. There are no exaggerations in the book or extravagances of any kind. There is nothing to strain our credulity. Everything in the story is not only possible but probable. Indeed, this novel holds a mirror before the real life of human beings.

As a picture of the sufferings of a child : It has been observed that *The Mill On The Floss* contains a vivid and touching picture of the sufferings of a child. This child is no other than Maggie who is the heroine of the novel. Book I which is the longest of all the books of this novel and which constitutes one-fourth of the entire novel has been devoted to the description of the childhood of Tom and Maggie, but of Maggie in particular. Maggie's sorrows and sufferings as a child have been described by George Eliot with great feeling and there is a lot of poignancy in this description. Maggie as a child suffered anguish for various reasons. She was constantly scolded by her mother, and by her uncles and her aunts. But the chief reason for her suffering was the indifference and even callousness of Tom towards her. Much of Maggie's suffering was, of course, George Eliot's own experience as a child in her father's home. Indeed, Book I of this novel gives us a remarkable picture of child-psychology. We are given a detailed

picture of the working of child-mind through the portrayal of Maggie, Tom, Lucy, and Bob Jakin.

Serious and tragic : *The Mill On The Floss* tells a serious and sad story. There is, firstly, the suffering of Maggie as a child ; there are the financial difficulties and distress of the Moss family ; there are the misfortunes of the Tulliver family leading to their bankruptcy, the paralysis of Mr. Tulliver and his death in tragic circumstances. There are the sufferings of Tom who, at the age of sixteen, was called upon to shoulder heavy burdens and responsibilities and who had to work from morning till night everyday to earn a living for the family and to save enough to pay his father's debts. The sufferings of Maggie do not come to an end even when she is grown up. Both her love-affairs, with Philip and with Stephen, bring her nothing but misery and sorrow. Philip Wakem, too, is an unhappy man. Lucy is another character who suffers terribly on discovering the elopement of her lover with her cousin. Finally, there is the flood. Indeed, the general atmosphere of the novel is sad and pessimistic.

Humour : Although *The Mill On The Floss* tells a sad and tragic story, the element of humour so characteristic of George Eliot's earlier novels is to be found in abundance in this book. Of oourse, the humour in this novel, as in her other novels, is of the unconscious kind. In other words, the humorous characters in this book are not aware that they are a source of humour. For instance, we laugh at the unreasonableness, the contrariness, and bullying nature of Mrs. Glegg. But Mrs. Glegg does not know that there is anything in her to laugh at. Similarly, we laugh at Mrs. Pullet's over sentimentality and her constant preoccupation with diseases, but Mrs. Pullet would have been surprised if she were to know that she was a source of laughter for others. Indeed, much of the humour in this novel proceeds from the oddities and peculiarities of the uncles and aunts and the incongruity between their professions of sympathy for the Tulliver family and their failure to do anything substantial to relieve the distress of that family. Bob Jakin is another source of humour in the book. This man used to talk with "unembarrassed loquacity". Indeed his copious talk in which he refers to all sorts of things, relevant and irrelevant, is very amusing and entertaining.

The novelist's comments : George Eliot is not content with a mere narration of the story. Again and again, in the course of her narration of the story she pauses to offer comments on

human nature and to make generalizations about human life. To take only a couple of examples, this is what the novelist has to say about the sufferings of a child : "These bitter sorrows of childhood ! when sorrow is new and strange, when hope has not yet got wings to fly beyond the days and weeks and the space from summer to summer seems measureless." And this is what the novelist has to say about the hopelessness of youth : "There is no hopelessness so sad as that of early youth when the soul is made up of wants and has no long memories, no superadded life in the life of others ; though we look lightly at such premature despair as if our vision of the future lightened the blind sufferer's present." Referring to the obstinacy of Mr. Tulliver, the novelist makes the following comment, "There are certain animals to which tenacity of position is a law of life—they can never flourish again, after a single wrench, and there are certain human beings to whom predominance is a law of life—they can only sustain humiliation so long as they can refuse to believe in it, and in their own conception are predominant still." Some of the comments made by the novelist in the course of the story are quite long and hold up the progress of the plot. Some readers might consider these comments to be an intrusion and might feel a little irritated because the comments are quite frequent. But it is only the superficial readers who will feel irritated by these comments and observations because the superficial reader is interested only in the plot which should move rapidly and without halting. But for the reflective type of reader, these comments have an interest of their own. Indeed, some of these comments possess a great psychological value and greatly add to our knowledge of human nature. Some of the comments have a philosophical character and they lend a highly intellectual tone to the novel. An example of the philosophical comment may be quoted here : "For the tragedy of our lives is not created entirely from within. "Character," says Novalist, in one of his questionable aphorisms,—"character is destiny." But not the whole of our destiny. Hamlet Prince of Denmark, was speculative and irresolute and we have a great tragedy in consequence. But if his father had lived to a good old age and his uncle had died an early death, we can conceive Hamlet's having married Ophelia and got through life with the reputation of sanity notwithstanding many soliloquies, and some moody sarcasms towards the fair daughter of Polonius, to say nothing of the frankest incivility to his father-in-law."

BOOK FIRST
BOY AND GIRL

Chapter I

OUTSIDE DORLCOTE MILL

A wide plain, where the broadening Floss hurries on between its green banks to the sea, and the loving tide, rushing to meet it, checks its passage with an impetuous embrace. On this mighty tide the black ships—laden with the fresh-scented fir planks, with rounded sacks of oil-bearing seed, or with the dark glitter of coal—are borne along to the town of St. Ogg's, which shows its aged, fluted red roofs and the broad gables of its wharves between the low wooded hill and the river brink, tinging the water with a soft purple hue under the transient glance of this February sun.

Just by the red-roofed town the tributary Ripple flows with a lively current into the Floss. How lovely the little river is, with its dark, changing wavelets! It seems to me like a living companion while I wander along the bank and listen to its low placid voice, as to the voice of one who is deaf and loving. I remember those large dipping willows. I remember the stone bridge.

And this is Dorlcote Mill. I must stand a minute or two here on the bridge and look at it, though the clouds are threatening, and it is far on in the afternoon. Even in this leafless time of departing February it is pleasant to look at—perhaps the chill damp season adds a charm to the trimly kept comfortable dwelling house, as old as the elms and chestnuts that shelter it from the northern blast.

Now I can turn my eyes towards the mill again, and watch the unresting wheel sending out its diamond jets of water. That

little girl is watching it too: she has been standing on just the same spot at the edge of the water ever since I paused on the bridge.

Ah, my arms are really benumbed. I have been pressing my elbows on the arms of my chair and dreaming that I was standing on the bridge in front of Dorlcote Mill, as it looked one February afternoon many years ago. Before I dozed off, I was going to tell you what Mr. and Mrs. Tulliver were talking about as they sat by the bright fire in the left hand parlour on that very afternoon I have been dreaming of.

Chapter 2

MR. TULLIVER, OF DORLCOTE MILL, DECLARES HIS RESOLUTION ABOUT TOM

"What I want, you know," said Mr. Tulliver, speaking to his wife—"what I want is to give Tom a good eddication; an eddication as'll be a bread to him. That was what I was thinking of when I gave notice for him to leave th' accademy at Ladyday. I mean to put him to a downright good school at Midsummer. The two years at th' academy 'ud ha' done well enough if I'd meant to make a miller and farmer of him; for he's had a fine sight more schoolin' nor *I* ever got: all the learnin' *my* father ever paid for a bit o' birch at one end and the alphabet at th' other. But I should like Tom to be a bit of a scholard, so as he might be up to the tricks o' these fellows as talk fine and write with a flourish. It 'ud be a help to me wi' these law suits, and arbitrations, and things. I wouldn't make a downright lawyer o' the lad—I should be sorry for him to be a raskill—but a sort o' engineer, or a surveyor, or an auctioneer and vallyer, like Riley, or one o' them smartish businesses as are all profits and no outlay, only for a big watch-chain and a high stool. They're pretty nigh all one, and they're not far off being even wi' the law, *I* believe; for Riley looks Lawyer Wakem i' the face as hard as one cat looks another. *He's* none frightened at him."

"Well, Mr. Tulliver, you know best: *Iv'e* no objections. But hadn't I better kill a couple o' fowl and have th' aunts

and uncles to dinner next week, so as you may hear what Sister Glegg and Sister Pullet have got to say about it? There's a couple o' fowl *wants* killing!"

You may kill every fowl i' the yard, if you like, Bessy; but I shall ask neither aunt nor uncle what I'm to do wi' my own lad," said Mr. Tulliver defiantly.

"Dear heart!" said Mr. Tulliver, shocked at this sanguinary rhetoric, "how can you talk so, Mr. Tulliver? But it's your way to speak disrespectful o' my family; and Sister Glegg throws all the blame up o' me, though I'm sure I'm as innocent as the babe unborn. For nobody's ever heard *me* say as it wasn't lucky for my children to have aunts and uncles as can live independent. However, if Tom's to go to a new school, I should like him to go where I can wash him and mend him; else he might as well have calico as linen, for they'd be one as yellow as th' other before they'd been washed half a dozen times. And then, when the box is goin' backards and forrads, I could send the lad a cake, or a porkpie, or an apple; for he can do with an extry bit, bless him, whether they stint him at the meals or no. My children can eat as much victuals as most, thank God."

"Well, well, we won't send him out o' reach o' the carrier's cart, if other things fit in," said Mr. Tulliver. "But you mustn't put a spoke i' the wheel about the washing, if we can't get a school near enough. That's the fault I have to find wi' you, Bessy; if you see a stick i' the road you're allays thinkin' you can't step over it. You'd want me not to hire a good waggoner 'cause he'd got a mole on his face."

"Dear heart!" said Mrs. Tulliver, in mild surprise, "when did I iver make objections to a man because he'd got a mole on his face? I'm rather fond o' the moles, for my brother, as is dead an' gone, had a mole on his brow. But I can't remember your iver offering to hire a waggoner with a mole. Mr. Tulliver. There was John Gibbs hadn't a mole on his face no more nor you have, an' I was all for having you hire *him*; an' so you did hire him, an' if he hadn't died o' th' inflammation, as we paid Dr. Turnbull for attending him, he'd very like ha' been driving the waggon now. He might have a mole somewhere out o' sight, but how was I to know that, Mr. Tulliver?"

"No, no, Bessy; I didn't mean justly the mole—I meant it to stand for summat else; but niver mind—it's puzzling work, talking is. What I'm thinking on, is how to find the right sort o' school to send Tom to, for I might be ta'en in again, as I've been wi' th' academy. I'll have nothing to do wi' a 'cademy again: whativer school I send Tom to, it shan't be 'cademy; it shall be a place where the lads spend their time i' summat else besides blacking the family's shoes and getting up the potatoes. It's an uncommon puzzling thing to know what school to pick."

Mr. Tulliver paused a minute or two, and dived with both hands into his breeches pockets as if he hoped to find some suggestion there. Apparently he was not disappointed, for he presently said, "I know what I'll do—I'll talk it over wi' Riley: he's coming to-morrow t' arbitrate about the dam."

"I think I've hit it, Bessy," was his first remark after a short silence. "Riley's as likely a man as any to know o' some school; he's had schooling himself, an' goes about to all sorts o' places—arbitratin' and vallyin' and that. And we shall have time to talk it over to-morrow night when the business is done. I want Tom to be such a sort o' man as Riley, you know—as can talk pretty nigh as well as if it was all wrote out for him, and knows a good lot o' words as don't mean much, so as you can't lay hold of 'em i' law; and a good solid knowledge o' business too."

"Well," said Mrs. Tulliver, "so far as talking proper and knowing everything, and walking with a bend in his back, and setting his hair up, I shouldn't mind the lad being brought up to that. But them fine talking men from the big towns mostly wear the false shirt-fronts; they wear a frill till it's all a mess, and then hide it with a bib; I know Riley does. And then, if Tom's to go and live at Mudport, like Riley, he'll have a house with a kitchen hardly big enough to turn in, an' niver get a fresh egg for his breakfast, an' sleep up three pair o' stairs—or four, for what I know—an' be burnt to death before he can get down."

"No, no," said Mr. Tulliver, "I've no thoughts of his going to Mudport: I mean him to set up his office at St. Ogg's, close by us, an' live at home. But," continued Mr. Tulliver after a

pause, "what I'm a bit afraid on is, as Tom hasn't got the right sort o' brains for a smart fellow. I doubt he's a bit slowish. He takes after your family, Bessy."

"Yes, that he does," said Mrs. Tulliver, accepting the last proposition entirely on its own merits; "he's wonderful for liking a deal o' salt in his broth. That was my brother's way, and my father's, before him."

"It seems a bit of a pity, though," said Mr. Tulliver, "as the lad should take after the mother's side instead o' the little wench. That's the worst on't wi' the crossing o' breeds: you can never justly calkilate what'll come on't. The little un takes after my side now: she's twice as 'cute as Tom. Too 'cute for a woman, I'm afraid," continued Mr. Tulliver, turning his head dubiously first on one side and then on the other. "It's no mischief much while she's a little un, but an over-'cute woman's no better nor a long-tailed sheep—she'll fetch none the bigger price for that."

"Yes, it is a mischief while she's little un, Mr. Tulliver, for it all runs to naughtiness. How to keep her in a clean pinafore two hours together passes my cunning. An' now you put me i' mind," continued Mrs. Tulliver, rising and going to the window, "I don't know where she is now, an' it's pretty nigh tea-time. Ah, I thought so—wanderin' up an' down by the water, like a wild thing: she'll tumble in some day."

Mrs. Tulliver rapped the window sharply, beckoned, and shook her head—a process which she repeated more than once before she returned to her chair.

"You talk o' 'cuteness, Mr. Tulliver," she observed as she sat down, "but I'am sure the child's half an idiot i' some things: for if I send her upstairs to fetch anything, she forgets what she's gone for, an' perhaps 'ull sit down on the floor i' the sunshine an' plait her hair an' sing to herself like a Bedlam creatur', all the—while I'm waiting for her downstairs. That niver run i' my family, thank God, no more nor a brown skin as makes her look-like a mulatter. I don't like to fly i' the face o' Providence, but it seems hard as I should have but one gell, an' her so comical."

"Pooh, nonsense!" said Mr. Tulliver; "she's a straight black-eyed wench as anybody need wish to see. I don't know i' what she's behind other folk's children; and she can read almost as well as the parson."

"But her hair won't curl all I can do with it, and she's so franzy about having it put i' paper, and I've such work as never was to make her stand and have it pinched with th' irons."

"Cut it off—cut it off short," said the father, rashly.

"How can you talk so, Mr. Tulliver? She's too big a gell, gone nine, and tall of her age, to have her hair cut short; an' there's her cousin Lucy's got a row o' curls round her head, an' not a hair out o' place. It seems hard as my sister Deane should have that pretty child; I'am sure Lucy takes more after me nor my own child does. Maggie, Maggie," continued the mother, in a tone of half-coaxing fretfulness, as this small mistake of nature entered the room, "where's the use o' my telling you to keep away from the water? You'll tumble in and be drownded some day, an' then you'll be sorry you didn't do as mother told you."

Maggie's hair, as she threw off her bonnet, painfully confirmed her mother's accusation. Mrs. Tulliver, desiring her daughter to have a curled crop, "like other folks's children," had had it cut too short in front to be pushed behind the ears; and as it was usually straight an hour after it had been taken out of paper, Maggie was incessantly tossing her head to keep the dark heavy locks out of her gleaming black eyes—an action which gave her very much the air of a small Shetland pony.

"O dear, O dear, Maggie, what are you thinkin' of, to throw your bonnet down there? Take it upstairs, there's a good gell an' let your hair be brushed, an' put your other pinafore on, an' change your shoes—do, for shame; an' come an' go on with your patchwork, like a little lady.

"O mother," said Maggie, in a vehemently cross tone, "I don't *want* to do my patchwork."

"What! not your pretty patchwork, to make a counterpane for your aunt Glegg?"

"It's foolish work" said Maggie, with a toss of her mane—"tearing things to pieces to sew 'em together again. And I don't want to do anything for my aunt Glegg—I don't like her."

Exit Maggie, dragging her bonnet by the string, while Mr. Tulliver laughs audibly.

"I wonder at you, as you'll laugh at her, Mr. Tulliver," said the mother, with feeble fretfulness in her tone. "You encourage her i' naughtiness. An' her aunts will have it as it's me spoils her."

Mrs. Tulliver was what is called a good-tempered person—never cried when she was a baby on any slighter ground than hunger and pins; and from the cradle upwards had been healthy, fair, plump, and dull-witted; in short, the flower of her family for beauty and amiability. But milk and mildness are not the best things for keeping, and when they turn only a little sour they may disagree with young stomachs seriously.

Chapter 3

MR. RILEY GIVES HIS ADVICE CONCERNING A SCHOOL FOR TOM

The gentleman in the ample white cravat and shirt-frill, taking his brandy-and-water so pleasantly with his good friend Tulliver, is Mr. Riley, a gentleman with a waxen complexion and fat hands, rather highly educated for an auctioneer and appraiser, but large-hearted enough to show a great deal of *bonhomie* towards simple country acquaintances of hospitable habits. Mr. Riley spoke of such acquaintances kindly as "people of the old school."

The conversation had come to a pause. Mr. Tulliver, not without a particular reason, had abstained from a seventh recital of the cool retort by which Riley had shown himself too many for Dix, and how Wakem had had his comb cut for once in his life, now the business of the dam had been settled by arbitration, and how there never would have been any dispute at all about the height of water if everybody was what they should

be, and Old Harry hadn't made the lawyers. Mr. Tulliver was, on the whole, a man of safe traditional opinions; but on one or two points he had trusted to his unassisted intellect, and had arrived at several questionable conclusions; among the rest, that rats, weevils, and lawyers were created by Old Harry.

"There's a thing I've got i' my head," said Mr. Tulliver at last, in rather a lower tone than usual, as he turned his head and looked steadfastly at his companion.

"Ah!" said Mr. Riley, in a tone of mild interest. He was a man with heavy waxen eyelids and high-arched eyebrows, looking exactly the same under all circumstances. This immovability of face and the habit of taking pinch of snuff before he gave an answer, made him trebly oracular to Mr. Tulliver.

"It's a very particular thing," he went on; "it's about my boy Tom."

At the sound of this name, Maggie, who was seated on a low stool close by the fire, with a large book on her lap, shook her heavy hair back and looked up eagerly. There were few sounds that roused Maggie when she was dreaming over her book, but Tom's name served as well as the shrillest whistle: in an instant she was on the watch, with gleaming eyes, like a Skye terrier suspecting mischief, or at all events determined to fly at anyone who threatened it towards Tom.

"You see, I want to put him to a new school at Midsummer," said Mr. Tulliver; "he's comin' away from the 'cademy at Ladyday, an' I shall let him run loose for a quarter; but after that I want to send him to a downright good school, where they'll make a scholard of him."

"Well," said Mr. Riley, "there's no greater advantage you can give him than a good education. Not," he added, with polite significance—"not that a man can't be an excellent miller and farmer, and a shrewed sensible fellow into the bargain, without much help from the schoolmaster."

"I believe you," said Mr. Tulliver, winking, and turning his head on one side, "but that's where it is. *I don't mean* Tom to

be a miller and farmer. I see no fun i' that: why, if I made him a miller an' farmer, he'd be expectin' to take to the mill an' the land, an' a-hinting at me as it was time for me to lay by an' think o' my latter end. Nay, nay. I've seen enough o' that wi' sons. I'll niver pull my coat off before I go to bed. I shall give Tom an eddication an' put him to a business, as he may make a nest for himself, an' not want to push me out o' mine. Pretty well if he gets it when I'm dead an' gone. I shan't be put off wi' spoon-meat afore I've lost my teeth."

This was evidently a point on which Mr. Tulliver felt strongly, and the impetus which had given unusual rapidity and emphasis to his speech, showed itself still unexhausted for some minutes afterwards in a defiant motion of the head from side to side, and an occasional "Nay, nay" like a subsiding growl.

These angry symptoms were keenly observed by Maggie, and cut her to the quick. Tom, it appeared, was supposed capable of turning his father out of doors, and of making the future in some way tragic by his wickedness. This was not to be borne; and Maggie jumped up from her stool, forgetting all about her heavy book, which fell with a bang within the fender; and going up between her father's knees, said, in a half crying, half-indignant voice—

"Father, Tom wouldn't be naughty to you ever; I know he wouldn't."

Mrs. Tulliver was out of the room superintending a choice supper dish, and Mr. Tulliver's heart was touched; so Maggie was not scolded about the book. Mr. Riley quietly picked it up and looked at it, while the father laughed with a certain tenderness in his hard-lined face, and patted his little girl on the back, and then held her hands and kept her between his knees.

"What! they mustn't say any harm o' Tom, eh?" said Mr. Tulliver, looking at Maggie with a twinkling eye. Then, in a lower voice, turning to Mr. Riley, as though Maggie couldn't hear, "She understands what one's talking about so as never was. And you should hear her read—straight off, as if she knowed it all beforehand. And allays at her book! But it's

bad—it's bad," Mr. Tulliver added, sadly, checking this blamable exultation; "a woman's no business wi' being so clever; it'll turn to trouble, I doubt. But, bless you!"—here the exultation was clearly recovering the mastery—"she'll read the books and understand 'em better nor half the folks as are growed up."

"Did you ever hear the like on't?" said Mr. Tulliver, as Maggie retired. "It's a pity but what she'd been the lad—she'd ha' been a match for the lawyers, *she* would. It's the wonderful'st thing"—here he lowered his voice—"as I picked the mother because she wasn't o'er 'cute—bein' a good-looking woman too, an' come of a rare family for managing; but I picked her from her sisters o' purpose, 'cause she was a bit weak, like; for I wasn't a-goin' to be told the rights o' things by my own fireside. But you see, when a man's got brains himself, ther's no knowing where they'll run to; an' a pleasant sort o' soft woman may go on breeding you stupid lads and 'cute wenches, till it's like as if the world was turned topsy-turvy. It's an uncommon puzzlin' thing."

Mr. Riley's gravity gave way, and he shook a little under the application of his pinch of snuff, before he said—

"But your lad's not stupid, is he? I saw him, when I was here last, busy making fishing tackle; he seemed quite up to it."

"Well, he isn't not to say stupid—he's got a notion o' things out o' door, an' a sort o' common sense, as he'd lay hold o' things by the right handle. But he's slow with his tongue, you see, and he reads but poorly, and can't abide the books, and spells all wrong, they tell me, an' as shy as can be wi' strangers, an' you never hear him say 'cute things like the little wench. Now, what I want is to send him to a school where they'll make him a bit nimble with his tongue and his pen, and make a smart chap of him. I want my son to be even wi' these fellows as have got the start o' me with having better schooling. Not but what, if the world had been left as God made it, I could ha' seen my way, and held my own wi' the best of 'em; but things have got so twisted round and wrapped up i' unreaonable words, as aren't a bit like 'em, as I'm o lean

at fault, often an' often. Everything winds about so—the more straightforward you are, the more you're puzzled."

"You're quite in the right of it, Tulliver," observed Mr. Riley. "Better spend an extra hundred or two on your son's education than leave it him in your will. I know I should have tried to do so by a son of mine, if I'd had one, though, God knows, I haven't your ready money to play with, Tulliver; and I have a houseful of daughters into the bargain."

"I daresay, now, you know of a school as 'ud be just the thing for Tom," said Mr. Tulliver, not diverted from his purpose by any sympathy with Mr. Riley's deficiency of ready cash.

Mr. Riley took a pinch of snuff, and kept Mr. Tulliver in suspense by a silence that seemed deliberative, before he said—

"I know of a very fine chance for anyone that's got the necessary money, and that's what you have, Tulliver. The fact is, I wouldn't recommend any friend of mine to send a boy to a regular school, if he could afford to do better. But if anyone wanted his boy to get superior instruction and training, where he would be the companion of his master, and that master a first-rate fellow—I know his man. I wouldn't mention the chance to everybody, because I don't think everybody would succeed in getting it, if he were to try; but I mention it to you, Tulliver—between ourselves."

The fixed enquiring glance with which Mr. Tulliver had been watching his friend's oracular face became quite eager.

"Ay, now, let's hear," he said, adjusting himself in his chair with the complacency of a person who is thought worthy of important communications.

"He's an Oxford man," said Mr. Riley sententiously, shutting his mouth close, and looking at Mr. Tulliver to observe the effect of this stimulating information.

"What! a parson?" said Mr. Tulliver, rather doubtfully.

"Yes—and an M. A. The bishop, I understand, thinks very highly of him: why, it was the bishop who got him his present curacy."

"Ah!" said Mr. Tulliver, to whom one thing was as wonderful as another concerning these unfamiliar phenomena. "But what can he want wi' Tom, then?"

"Why, the fact is, he's fond of teaching, and wishes to keep up his studies and a clergyman has but little opportunity for that in his parochial duties. He's willing to take one or two boys as pupils to fill up his time profitably. The boys would be quite of the family—the finest thing in the world for them; under Stelling's eye continually."

"But do you think they'd give the poor lad twice o' pudding?" said Mrs. Tulliver, who was now in her place again. "He's such a boy for pudding as never was; an' a growing boy like that—it's dreadful to think o' their stintin' him."

"And what money 'ud he want?" said Mr. Tulliver, whose instinct told him that the services of this admirable M.A. would bear a high price.

"Why, I know of a clergyman who asks a hundred and fifty with his youngest pupils, and he's not to be mentioned with Stelling, the man I speak of. I know, on good authority, that one of the chief people at Oxford said: 'Stelling might get the highest honours if he chose.' But he didn't care about university honours. He's a quiet man—not noisy."

"Ah, a deal better—a deal better," said Mr. Tulliver, "but a hundred and fifty's an uncommon price. I never thought o' payin' so much as that."

"A good education, let me tell you, Tulliver—a good education is cheap at the money. But Stelling is moderate in his terms—he's not a grasping man. I've no doubt he'd take your boy at a hundred, and that's what you wouldn't get many other clergymen to do. I'll write to him about it, if you like."

"Father," broke in Maggie, who had stolen unperceived to her father's elbow again, listening with parted lips, while she held her doll topsy-turvy and crushed its nose against the wood of the chair—"Father, is it a long way off where Tom is to go? Shan't we ever go to see him?"

"I don't know, my wench," said the father, tenderly. "Ask Mr. Riley; he knows."

Maggie came round promptly in front of Mr. Riley, and said, "How far is it, please, sir ?"

"O, a long, long way off," that gentleman answered, being of opinion that children, when they are not naughty, should always be spoken to jocosely. "You must borrow the seven-leagued boots to get to him."

"That's nonsense !" said Maggie, tossing her head haughtily and turning away with the tears springing in her eyes. She began to dislike Mr. Riley : it was evident he thought her silly and of no consequence.

"Hush, Maggie, for shame of you, asking questions and chatting," said her mother. "Come and sit down on your little stool and hold your tongue, do. But," added Mrs. Tulliver, who had her own alarm awakened, "is it so far off as I couldn't wash him and mend him ?"

"About fifteen miles, that's all," said Mr. Riley. "You can drive there and back in a day quite comfortably. Or—Stelling is a hospitable, pleasant man—he'd be glad to have you stay."

"But it's too far off for the linen, I doubt," said Mrs. Tulliver, sadly.

The entrance of the supper opportunely adjourned this difficulty, and relieved Mr. Riley from the labour of suggesting some solution or compromise – a labour which he would otherwise doubtless have undertaken ; for, as you perceive, he was a man of very obliging manners. And he had really given himself the trouble of recommending Mr. Stelling to his friend Tulliver without any positive expectation of a solid definite advantage resulting to himself, notwithstanding the subtle indications to the contrary which might have misled a too sagacious observer. For there is nothing more widely misleading than sagacity if it happens to get on a wrong scent ; and sagacity persuaded that men usually act and speak from distinct motives, with a consciously proposed end in view, is certain to waste its energies on imaginary game. Plotting covetousness and deliberate contrivance, in order to compass a selfish end, are nowhere abundant but in the world of the dramatist : they demand too intense a mental action for many of our fellow-parishioners to be guilty of them. It is

easy enough to spoil the lives of our neighbours without taking so much trouble : we can do it by lazy acquiescene and lazy omission, by trivial falsities for which we hardly know a reason, by small frauds neutralised by small extravagancies, by maladroit flatteries, and clumsily improvised insinuations. We live from hand to mouth, most of us, with a small family of immediate desires—we do little else than snatch a morsel to satisfy the hungry brood, rarely thinking of seed corn or the next year's corp.

Chapter 4

TOM IS EXPECTED

It was a heavy disappointment to Maggie that she was not allowed to go with her father in the gig when he went to fetch Tom home from the academy ; but the morning was too wet, Mrs. Tulliver said, for a little girl to go out in her best bonnet. Maggie took the opposite view very strongly, and it was a direct consequence of this difference of opinion that when her mother was in the act of brushing out the reluctant black crop, Maggie suddenly rushed from under her hands and dipped her head in a basin of water standing near—in the vindictive determination that there should be no more chance of curls that day.

"Maggie, Maggie," exclaimed Mrs. Tulliver, sitting stout and helpless with the brushes on her lap, "what is to become of you if you're so naughty ? I'll tell your aunt Glegg and your aunt Pullet when they come next week, and they'll never love you any more. O dear, O dear ! look at your clean pinafore, wet from top to bottom. Folks 'ull think it's a judgment on me as I've got such a child—they'll think I've done summat wicked."

Before this remonstrance was finished, Maggie was already out of hearing, making her way towards the great attic that ran under the old high-pitched roof, shaking the water from her black locks as she ran, like a Skye terrier escaped from his bath. This attic was Maggie's favourite retreat on a wet day, when the weather was not too cold ; here she fitted out all her

ill-humours, and talked aloud to the worm-eaten floors and the worm-eaten shelves, and the dark rafters festooned with cobwebs; and here she kept a Fetish which she punished for all misfortunes. This was the trunk of a large wooden doll, which once stared with the roundest of eyes above the reddest of cheeks; but was now entirely defaced by a long career of vicarious suffering. Three nails driven into the head commemorated as many crises in Maggie's nine years of earthly struggle; that luxury of vengeance having been suggested to her by the picture of Jael destroying Sisera in the old Bible. The last nail had been driven in with a fiercer stroke than usual, for the Fetish on that occasion represented aunt Glegg.

Since then she had driven no more nails in, but had soothed herself by alternately grinding and beating the wooden heap agianst the rough brick of the great chimney that made two square pillars supporting the roof. That was what she did this morning on reaching the attic, sobbing all the while with a passion that expelled every other form of consciousness—even the memory of the grievance that had caused it. As at last the sobs were getting quieter, and the grinding less fierce, a sudden beam of sunshine, falling through the wire lattice across the worm-eaten shelves, made her throw away the Fetish and run to the window. The run was really breaking out; the sound of the mill seemed cheerful again; the granary doors were open; and there was Yap, the queer white and brown terrier, with one ear turned back, trotting about and sniffing vaguely as if he were in search of a companion. It was irresistible. Maggie tossed her hair back and ran downstairs, seized her bonnet without putting it on, peeped, and then dashed along the passage lest she should encounter her mother, and was quickly out in the yard, whirling round like a Pythoness, and singing as she whirled, "Yap, Yap, Tom's coming home!" while Yap danced and barked round her, as much as to say, if there was any noise wanted he was the dog for it.

"Hegh, hegh, Miss, you'll make yourself giddy, an' tumble down i' the dirt," said Luke, the head miller, a tall broad shouldered man of forty, black-eyed and black-haired, subdued by a general mealiness.

"Why, you're like my brother Tom, Luke," said Maggie, wishing to turn the conversation agreebly : "Tom's not fond of reading. I love Tom so dearly, Luke—better than anybody else in the world. When he grows up, I shall keep his house, and we shall always live together. I can tell him every thing he doesn't know. But I think Tom's clever, for all he doesn't like books : he makes beautiful whipcord and rabbit-pens."

"Ah," said Luke, "but he'll be fine an' vexed, as the rabbits are all dead."

' Dead !" screamed Maggie, jumging up from her sliding seat on the corn. "O dear, Luke ! What ! the lop-eared one and the spotted doe that Tom spent all his money to buy ?"

"As dead as moles," said Luke ! fetching his comparison from the unmistakable corpses nailed to the stable-wall.

"O dear, Luke," said Maggie, in a piteous tone, while the big tears rolled down her cheeks ; "Ton told me to take care of 'em, and I forgot. What *shall* I do ?"

"Well you see, Miss, they were in that far tool-house' an' it was nobody's business to see to 'em. I reckon Master Tom told Harry to feed 'em, but there's no countin' on Harry—*he's* a offal creature as iver come about the primises, he is. He remembers nothing but his own inside—an' I wish it 'ud gripe him."

"O, Luke, Tom told me to be sure and remember the rabbits every day ; but how could I, when they did not come into my head, you know ? O, he will be so angry with me. I know he will, and so sorry about his rabbits—and so am I sorry. O, what *shall* I do ?"

Chapter 5

TOM COMES HOME

Tom was to arrive early in the afternoon, and there was another fluttering heart besides Maggie's when it was late enough for the sound of the gig-wheels to be expected ; for

if Mrs. Tulliver had a strong feeling, it was fondness for her boy. At last the sound came—that quick light bowling of the gig-wheels—and in spite of the wind, which was blowing the clouds about, and was not likely to respect Mrs. Tulliver's curls and cap-strings, she came outside the door, and even held her hand on Maggie's offending head, forgetting all the griefs of the morning.

"There he is, my sweet lad! But, Lord! ha' mercy! he's got never a collar on; it's been lost on the road, I'll be bound, and spoilt the set."

Mrs. Tulliver stood with her arms open; Maggie jumped first on one leg and then on the other; while Tom descended from the gig, and said, with masculine reticence as to the tender emotions, "Hallo! Yap—what! are you there?

Nevertheless he submitted to be kissed willingly enough though Maggie hung on his neck in rather a strangling fashion, while his blue-grey eyes wandered towards the croft and the lambs and the river, where he promised himself that he would begin to fish the first thing to-morrow morning. He was one of those lads that grow everywhere in England, and, at twelve or thirteen years of age, look as much alike as goslings—a lad with light-brown hair, cheeks of cream and roses, full lips, indeterminate nose and eyebrows.

"Maggie," said Tom confidently, taking her into a corner as soon as his mother was gone out to examine his box, and the warm parlour had taken off the chill he had felt from the long drive, "you don't know what I've got in *my* pockets," nodding his head up and down as a means of rousing her sense of mystery.

"No," said Maggie. "How stodgy they look, Tom! is it marls (marbles) or cobnuts?" Maggie's heart sank a little, because Tom always said it was "no good" playing with *her* at those games—she played so badly.

"Marls! no; I've swopped all my marls with the little fellows, and cobnuts are no fun, you silly, only when the nuts are green. But see here!" He drew something half out of his right-hand pocket.

"What is it ?" said Maggie in a whisper, I can see nothing but a bit of yellow."

"Why, it's—a—new—Guess, Maggie !"

"O, I *can't* guess, Tom," said Maggie impatiently.

"Don't be a spitfire, else I won't tell you," said Tom, thrusting his hand back into his pocket, and looking determined.

"No, Tom," said Maggie, imploringly, laying hold of the arm that was held stiffly in the pocket. "I'm not cross, Tom ; it was only because I can't bear guessing. *Please* be good to me."

Tom's arm slowly relaxed, and he said : "Well, then, it's a new fish-line—two new uns—one for you, Maggie all to yourself I wouldn't go halves in the toffee and gingerbread on purpose to save the money ; and Gibson and Spouncer fought with me because I wouldn't. And here's hooks ; see here !—I say, *won't* we go and fish to-morrow down by the Round Pool ? And you shall catch your own fish, Maggie, and put the worms on, and everything—won't it be fun ?"

Maggie's answer was to throw her arms around Tom's neck and hug him, and hold her cheek against his without speaking, while he slowly unwound some of the line, saying, after a pause—

"Wasn't I a good brother, now, to buy you a line all to yourself ? You know, I needn't have bought it if I hadn't liked."

"Yes, very, very good——I *do* love you, Tom."

Tom had put the line back in his pocket, and was looking at the hooks one by one before he spoke again.

"And the fellows fought me because I wouldn't give in about the toffee."

"O dear ! I wish they wouldn't fight at your school, Tom. Didn't it hurt you ?"

"Hurt me ? No," said Tom, putting up the hooks again, taking out a large pocket-knife, and slowly opening the largest

blade, which he looked at meditatively as he rubbed his finger along it. Then he added—

"I gave Spouncer a black eye, I know—that's what he got by wanting to leather *me*; I wasn't going to go halves because anybody leathered me."

"O how brave you are, Tom! I think you're like Samson, If there came a lion roaring at me, I think you'd fight him—would't you, Tom?"

"How can a lion come roaring at you, you silly thing? There's no lions, only in the shows."

"No; but if we were in the lion countries—I mean in Africa, where it's very hot—the lions eat people there. I can show it you in the book where I read it."

"Well, I should get a gun and shoot him."

"But if you hadn't got a gun—we might have gone out, you know, not thinking—just as we go fishing and then a great lion might run towards us roaring, and we couldn't get away from him. What should you do, Tom?"

Tom paused, and at last turned away contemptuously, saying, "But the lion *isn't* coming. What's the use of talking?"

"But I like to fancy how it would be," said Maggie, following him. "Just think what you would do, Tom."

"O don't bother, Maggie! you're such a silly—I shall go and see my rabbits."

Maggie's heart began to flutter with fear. She dared not tell the sad truth at once, but she walked after Tom in trembling silence as he went out, thinking how she could tell him the news so as to soften at once his sorrow and his anger; for Maggie dreaded Tom's anger of all things—it was quite a different anger from her own.

"Tom," she said timidly, when they were out of doors, "how much money did you give for your rabbits?"

"Two half crowns and a sixpence," said Tom promptly.

"I think I've got a great deal more than that in my steel purse upstairs. I'll ask mother to give it you."

"What for ?" said Tom. "I don't want *your* money, you silly thing. I've got a great deal more money than you, because I'm a boy. I always have half-sovereigns and sovereigns for my Christmas boxes, because I shall be a man, and you only have five-shilling pieces, because you're only a girl."

"Well, but, Tom—if mother would let me give you two half-crowns and sixpence out of my purse to put into your pocket and spend, you know ; and buy some more rabbits with it ?"

"More rabbits ? I don't want any more."

"O, but Tom, they're all dead."

Tom stopped immediately in his walk and turned round towards Maggie. "You forgot to feed 'em, then, and Harry forgot ?" he said, his clour heightening for a moment, but soon subsiding. "I'll pitch into Harry—I'll have him turned away. And I don't love you, Maggie. You shan't go fishing with me tomorrow. I told you to go and see the rabbits every day." He walked on again.

"Yes, but I forgot—and I couldn't help it indeed, Tom. I'm so very sorry," said Maggie, while the tears rushed fast.

"You're a naughty girl," said Tom severely, "and I'm sorry I bought you the fish-line. I don't love you."

"O, Tom, it's very cruel," sobbed Maggie. "I'd forgive you, if *you* forgot anything—I wouldn't mind what you did—I'd forgive you and love you."

"Yes, you're a silly—but I never *do* forget things—I don't."

"O, please forgive me, Tom ; my heart will break," said Maggie, shaking with sobs, clinging to Tom's arm, and laying her wet cheek on his shoulder.

Tom shook her off, and stopped again, saying in a peremptory tone, "Now, Maggie, you just listen. Aren't I a good brother to you ?"

"Ye-ye-es," sobbed Maggie, her chin rising and falling convulsedly.

"Didn't I think about your fish-line all this quarter, and mean to buy it, and saved my money o' purpose, and wouldn't go halves in the toffee, and Spouncer fought me because I wouldn't?"

"Ye-ye-es—and I—lo-lo-love you so, Tom."

"But you're a naughty girl. Last holidays you licked the paint off my lozenge box, and the holidays before that you let the boat drag my fish-line down when I'd set you to watch it, and you pushed your head through my kite, all for nothing."

"But I didn't mean," said Maggie; "I couldn't help it."

"Yes, you could," said Tom, "if you'd minded what you were doing. And you're a naughty girl, and you shan't go fishing with me tomorrow."

With this terrible conclusion Tom ran away from Maggie towards the mill, meaning to greet Luke there and complain to him of Harry.

Maggie stood motionless, except for her sobs, for a minute or two; then she turned round and ran into the house and up to her attic, where she sat on the floor, and laid her head against the worm-eaten shelf, with a crushing sense of misery. Tom was come home, and she had thought how happy she should be—and now he was cruel to her. What use was anything, if Tom didn't love her? O, he was very cruel! Hadn't she wanted to give him the money, and said how very sorry she was? She knew she was naughty to her mother, but she had never been naughty to Tom—had never *meant* to be naughty to him.

"O, he is cruel!" Maggie sobbed aloud, finding a wretched pleasure in the hollow resonance that came through the long empty space of the attic. She never thought of beating or grinding her Fetish: she was too miserable to be angry.

These bitter sorrows of childhood! when sorrow is all new and strange, when hope has not yet got wings to fly beyond the days and weeks, and the space from summer to summer seems measureless.

Tom had been too much interested in his talk with Luke, in going the round of the premises, walking in and out where he

pleased, and whittling sticks without any particular reason, except that he didn't whittle sticks at school, to think of Maggie and the effect his anger had produced on her. He meant to punish her, and that business having been performed, he occupied himself with other matters, like a practical person. But when he had been called in to tea, his father said, "Why, where's the little wench ?" and Mrs. Tulliver, almost at the same moment said, "Where's your little sister?"—both of them having supposed that Maggie and Tom had been together all the afternoon.

"I don't know," said Tom. He didn't want to "tell" of Maggie though he was angry with her ; for Tom Tulliver was a lad of honour.

"What ! hasn't she been playing with you all this while ?" said the father. "She'd been thinking o' nothing but your coming home "

"I haven't seen her this two hours," says Tom, commencing on the plumcake.

"Goodness heart ! she's got drownded." exclaimed Mrs. Tulliver, rising from her seat and running to the window. "How could you let her do so ?" she added, as became a fearful woman, accusing she didn't know whom of she didn't know what.

"Nay, nay, she's none drownded," said Mr. Tulliver. "You 've been naughty to her, I doubt, Tom ?"

"I'm sure I haven't, father," said Tom indignantly. "I think she's in the house."

"Perhaps up in that attic," said Mrs. Tulliver, "a-singing and talking to herself, and forgetting all about meal-times."

"You go and fetch her down, Tom," said Mr. Tulliver rather sharply, his perspicacity or his fatherly fondness for Maggie making him suspect that the lad had been hard upon "the little un," else she would never have left his side. "And be good to her, do you hear ? Else I'll let you know better."

Tom never disobeyed his father, for Mr. Tulliver was a peremptory man, and, as he said, would never let anybody get hold of his whip-hand ; but he went out rather sullenly, carrying his piece of plumcake, and not intending to reprieve

Maggie's punishment, which was no more than she deserved. Tom was only thirteen, and had no decided views in grammar and arithmetic, regarding them for the most part as open questions, but he was particularly clear and positive on one point—namely, that he would punish everybody who deserved it : why, he wouldn't have minded being punished himself, if he deserved it ; but, then, he never *did* deserve it.

It was Tom's step, then, that Maggie heard on the stairs when her need of love had triumphed over her pride, and she was going down with her swollen eyes and dishevelled hair to beg for pity. At least her father would stroke her head and say, "Never mind, my wench." It is a wonderful subduer, this need of love—this hunger of the heart—as peremptory as that other hunger by which Nature forces us to submit to the yoke and change the face of the world.

But she knew Tom's step, and her heart began to beat violently with the sudden shock of hope. He only stood still at the top of the stairs and said, "Maggie your're to come down." But she rushed to him and clung round his neck, sobbing, "O Tom, please forgive me—I can't bear it—I will always be good—always remember things—do love me—please, dear Tom ?"

We learn to restrain ourselves as we get older. We keep apart when we have quarrelled, express ourselves in well-bred phrases, and in this way preserve a dignified alienation, showing much firmness on one side, and swallowing much grief on the other. We no longer approximate in our behaviour to the mere impulsiveness of the lower animals, but conduct ourselves in every respect like members of a highly civilized society. Maggie and Tom were still very much like young animals, and so she could rub her cheek against his, and kiss his ear in a random, sobbing way, and there were tender fibres in the lad that had been used to answer to Maggie's fondling ; so that he behaved with a weakness quite inconsistent with his resolution to punish her as much as she deserved : he actually began to kiss her in return, and say—

"Don't cry, then, Maggie—here, eat a bit o' cake".

Maggie's sobs began to subside, and she put out her mouth

for the cake and bit a piece ; and then Tom bit a piece, just for company, and they ate together and rubbed each other's cheeks and brows and noses together, while they ate, with a humiliating resemblance to two friendly ponies.

"Come along, Maggie, and have tea," said Tom at last, when there was no more cake except what was downstairs.

So ended the sorrows of this day, and the next morning Maggie was trotting with her own fishing rod in one hand and a handle of the basket in the other, stepping always, by a peculiar gift, in the muddiest places, and looking darkly radiant from under her beaver bonnet because Tom was good to her.

They were on their way to the Round Pool—that wonderful pool, which the floods had made a long while ago : no one knew how deep it was ; and it was mysterious, too, that it should be almost a perfect round, framed in with willows and tall reeds, so that the water was only to be seen when you got close to the brink. The sight of the old favourite spot always heightened Tom's good-humour, and he spoke to Maggie in the most amiable whispers as he opened the precious basket and prepared their tackle. He threw her line for her, and put the rod into her hand. Maggie thought it probable that the small fish would come to her hook and the large ones to Tom's. But she had forgotten all about the fish, and was looking dreamily at the glassy water, when Tom said, in a loud whisper, "Look, look, Maggie !" and came running to prevent her from snatching her line away.

Maggie was frightened lest she had been doing something wrong, as usual, but presently Tom drew out her line and brought a large tench bouncing on the grass.

Tom was excited.

"O Magsie ! you little duck ! Empty the basket."

Maggie was not concious of unusual merit, but it was enough that Tom called her Magsie, and was pleased with her.

Chapter 6

THE AUNTS AND UNCLES ARE COMING

It was Easter week, and Mrs. Tulliver's cheese-cakes were more exquisitely light than usual: "a puff o' wind 'ud make 'em blow about like feathers," Kezia the housemaid said—feeling proud to live under a mistress who could make such pastry; so that no season or circumstances could have been more propitious for a family party, even if it had not been advisable to consult sister Glegg and sister Pullet about Tom's going to school.

"I'd as lief not invite sister Deane this time," said Mrs. Tulliver, "for she's as jealous and having as can be, and's allays trying to make the worst o' my poor children to their aunts and uncles."

"Yes, yes," said Mr. Tulliver, "ask her to come. I never hardly get a bit o' talk with Deane now: we haven't had him this six months. What's it matter what she says?—my children need be beholding to nobody."

"That's what you allays say, Mr. Tulliver; but I'm sure there's nobody o' your side, neither aunt nor uncle, to leave 'em so much as a five-pound note for a leggicy. And there's sister Glegg, and sister Pullet too, saving money unknown—for they put by all their own interest and butter-money too; their husbands buy 'em everything." Mrs. Tulliver was a mild woman, but even a sheep will face about a little when she has lambs.

"Tchuh!" said Mr. Tulliver. "It takes a big loaf when there's many to breakfast. What signifies your sisters' bits o' money when they've got half-a-dozen nevvies and nieces to divide it among? And your sister Deane won't get 'em to leave all to one, I reckon, and make the country cry shame on 'em when they are dead?"

"I don't know what she won't get 'em to do," said Mrs. Tulliver, "for my children are so awk'ard wi' their aunts and uncles. Maggie's ten times naughtier when they come than she is other days, and Tom doesn't like 'em, bless him—though it's more nat'ral in a boy than a gell. And there's Lucy

Deane's such a good child—you may set her on a stool, and there she'll sit for an hour together, and never offer to get off. I can't help loving the child as if she was my own ; and I'm sure she's more like *my* child than sister Deane's, for she'd allays a very poor colour for one of our family, sister Deane had."

"Well, well, if you're fond o' the child, ask her father and mother to bring her with 'em. And won't you ask their aunt and uncle Moss too, and some o' *their* children ?"

"O dear, Mr. Tulliver, why, there'd be eight people besides the children, and I must put two more leaves i' the table, besides reaching down more o' the dinner-service ; and you know as well as I do as *my* sisters and *your* sister don't suit well together."

"Well, well, do as you like, Bessy," said Mr. Tulliver, taking up his hat and walking out to the mill. Few wives were more submissive than Mrs. Tulliver on all points unconnected with her family relations ; but she had been a Miss Dodson, and the Dodsons were a very respectable family indeed—as much looked up to as any in their own parish, or the next to it. The Miss Dodsons had always been thought to hold up their heads very high, and no one was surprised that the two eldest had married so well—not at an early age, for that was not the practice of the Dodson family. There were particular ways of doing everything in that family : particular ways of bleaching the linen, of making the cowslip wine, curing the hams, and keeping the bottled gooseberries ; so that no daughter of that house could be indifferent to the privilege of having been born a Dodson, rather than a Gibson or a Watson. Funerals were always conducted with peculiar propriety in the Dodson family: the hatbands were never of a blue shade, the gloves never split at the thumb, everybody was a mourner who ought to be, and there were always scarfs for the bearers. When one of the family was in trouble or sickness, all the rest went to visit the unfortunate member, usually at the same time, and did not shrink from uttering the most disagreeable truths that correct family feeling dictated: if the illness or trouble was the sufferer's own fault, it was not in the practice of the Dodson family to shrink from saying so. In short, there was in this family a peculiar tradition as to what was the right thing in

household management and social demeanour, and the only bitter circumstance attending this superiority was a painful inability to approve the condiments or the conduct of families ungoverned by the Dodson tradition. A female Dodson, when in "strange houses", always ate dry bread with her tea, and declined any sort of preserves, having no confidence in the butter, and thinking that the preserves had probably begun to ferment from want of due sugar and boiling. There were some Dodsons less like the family than others—that was admitted; but in so far as they were "kin" they were of necessity better than those who were "no kin". And it is remarkable that while no individual Dodson was satisfied with any other individual Dodson, each was satisfied, not only with him or her self, but with the Dodsons collectively. The feeblest member of a family—the one who has the least character—is often the merest epitome of the family habits and traditions; and Mrs. Tulliver was a thorough Dodson, though a mild one, as small-beer, so long as it is anything, is only describable as very weak ale: and though she had groaned a little in her youth under the yoke of her elder sisters, and still shed occasional tears at their sisterly reproaches, it was not in Mrs. Tulliver to be an innovator on the family ideas. She was thankful to have been a Dodson, and to have one child who took after her own family, at least in his features and complexion, in liking salt and in eating beans, which a Tulliver never did.

On Wednesday, the day before the aunts and uncles were coming, there were such various and suggestive scents, as of plumcakes in the oven and jellies in the hot state, mingled with the aroma of gravy, that it was impossible to feel altogether gloomy: there was hope in the air. Tom and Maggie made several inroads into the kitchen, and like other marauders, were induced to keep aloof for a time only by being allowed to carry a sufficient load of booty.

"Tom," said Maggie, as they sat on the boughs of the elder-tree, eating their jam puffs, "shall you run away to-morrow?"

"No," said Tom slowly, when he had finished his puff and was eyeing the third, which was to be divided between them —"No, I shan't."

"Why, Tom? Because Lucy's coming?"

"No," said Tom, opening his pocket-knife and holding it over the puff, with his head on one side in a dubitative manner. (It was a difficult problem to divide that very irregular polygon into two equal parts.) "What do *I* care about Lucy? She's only a girl—*she* can't play at bandy."

"Is it the tipsy-cake, then?" said Maggie, exerting her hypothetic powers, while she leaned forward towards Tom with her eyes fixed on the hovering knife.

"No, you silly, that'll be good the day after. It's the pudden. I know what the pudden's to be—apricot roll-up—O my buttons!"

With this interjection, the knife descended on the puff and it was in two, but the result was not satisfactory to Tom, for he still eyed the halves doubtfully. At last he said—

"Shut your eyes, Maggie."

"What for?"

"You never mind what for. Shut 'em, when I tell you."

Maggie obeyed.

"Now, which'll you have, Maggie—right hand or left?"

"I'll have that with the jam run out," said Maggie, keeping her eyes shut to please Tom.

"Why, you don't like that, you silly. You may have it if it comes to you fair, but I shan't give it you without. Right or left—you choose now. Ha-a!" said Tom, in a tone of exasperation, as Maggie peeped. "You keep your eyes shut, now, else you shan't have any."

Maggie's power of sacrifice did not extend so far; indeed, I fear she cared less that Tom should enjoy the utmost possible amount of puff than that he should be pleased with her for giving him the best bit. So she shut her eyes quite close, till Tom told her to "say which," and then she said, "Left-hand."

"You've got it," said Tom, in rather a bitter tone.

"What! the bit with the jam run out?"

"No; here take it," said Tom firmly, handing decidedly the best piece to Maggie.

"O, please, Tom, have it : I don't mind—I like the other : please take this."

"No, I shan't," said Tom, almost crossly, beginning on his own inferior piece.

Maggie, thinking it was no use to contend further, began too, and ate up her half puff with considerable relish as well as rapidity. But Tom had finished first, and had to look on while Maggie ate her last morsel or two, feeling in himself a capacity for more. Maggie didn't know Tom was looking at her : she was seesawing on the elder bough, lost to almost everything but a vague sense of jam and idleness.

"O, you greedy thing !" said Tom, when she had swallowed the last morsel. He was conscious of having acted very fairly and thought she ought to have considered this, and made up to him for it. He would have refused a bit of hers beforehand, but one is naturally at a different point of view before and after one's own share of puff is swallowed.

Maggie turned quite pale. "O, Tom, why didn't you ask me ?"

"*I* wasn't going to ask you for a bit, you greedy. You might have thought of it without, when you knew I gave you the best bit."

"But I wanted you to have it—you know I did," said Maggie in an injured tone.

"Yes, but I wasn't going to do what wasn't fair, like Spouncer. He always takes the best bit, if you don't punch him for it ; and if you choose the best with your eyes shut, he changes his hands. But if I go halves, I'll go 'em fair—only I wouldn't be a greedy."

With this cutting innuendo, Tom jumped down from his bough, and threw a stone with a "hoigh !" as a friendly attention to Yap, who had also been looking on while the eatables vanished, with an agitation of his ears and feelings which could hardly have been without bitterness. Yet the excellent dog accepted Tom's attention with as much alacrity as if he had been treated quite generously.

But Maggie, gifted with that superior power of misery which

distinguishes the human being and places him at a proud distance from the most melancholy chimpanzee, sat still on her bough, and gave herself up to the keen sense of unmerited reproach. She would have given the world not to have eaten all her puff and to have saved some of it for Tom. Not but that the puff was very nice, for Maggie's palate was not at all obtuse, but she would have gone without it many times over sooner than Tom should call her greedy and be cross with her. And he had said he wouldn't have it—and she ate it without thinking—how could she help it? The tears flowed so plentifully that Maggie saw nothing around her for the next ten minutes; but by that time resentment began to give away to the desire of reconciliation, and she jumped from the bough to look for Tom. He was not longer in the paddock behind the rickyard. Where was he likely to be gone, and Yap with him? Maggie ran to the high bank against the great holly tree, where she could see far away towards the Floss. There was Tom; but her heart sank again as she saw how far off he was on his way to the great river, and that he had another companion besides Yap—naughty Bob Jakin, whose official, if not natural function, of frightening the birds was just now at a standstill. Maggie felt sure that Bob was wicked, without very distinctly knowing why; unless it was because Bob's mother was a dreadfully large, fat woman, who lived at a queer round house down the river; and once, when Maggie and Tom had wandered thither, there rushed out a brindled dog that wouldn't stop barking; and when Bob's mother came out after it, and screamed above the barking to tell them not to be frightened, Maggie thought she was scolding them fiercely, and her heart beat with terror.

It must be owned that Tom was fond of Bob's company. How could it be otherwise? Bob knew, directly he saw a bird's egg, whether it was a swallow's or a tomtit's or a yellowhammer's; he found out all the wasps' nests, and could set all sorts of traps; he could climb the trees like a squirrel, and had quite a magical power of detecting hedgehogs and stoats; and he had courage to do things that were rather naughty, such as making gaps in the hedgerows, throwing stones after the sheep, and killing a cat that was wandering *incognito*. Such qualities in an inferior, who could always be treated with authority in spite of his superior knowingness, had necessarily a fatal fascination for

Tom ; and every holiday time Maggie was sure to have days of grief because he had gone off with Bob.

Well! there was no hope for it : he was gone now, and Maggie could think of no comfort but to sit down by the holly or wander by the hedgerow, and fancy it was all different, re-fashioning her little world into just what she should like it to be.

"He's none so full now, the Floss isn't," said Bob, as he kicked the water up before him, with an agreeable sense of being insolent to it. "Why, last 'ear the meadows was all one sheet o' water, they was."

"Ay, but," said Tom, whose mind was prone to see an opposition between statements that were really quite accordant, "but there was a big flood once, when the Round Pool was made. *I* know there was, 'cause father says so. And the sheep and cows were all drowned, and the boats went all over the fiedls ever such a way."

"*I* don't care about a flood comin," said Bob ; "I don't mind the water no more nor the land. I'd swim—*I* would."

"Ah, but if you got nothing to eat for ever so long ?" said Tom, his imagination becoming quite active under the stimulus of that dread. "When I'm a man, I shall make a boat with a wooden house to the top of it, like Noah's ark, and keep plenty to eat in it—rabbits and things—all ready. And then if the flood came, you know, Bob, I shouldn't mind— —And I'd take you in if I saw you swimming," he added, in the tone of a benevolent patron.

"I aren't frightened," said Bob, to whom hunger did not appear so appalling. "But I'd get in an' knock the rabbits o' th' head when you wanted to eat 'em."

"Ah, and I should have halfpence. and we'd play at heads-and-tails," said Tom, not contemplating the possibility that this recreation might have fewer charms for his mature age. "I'd divide fair to begin with, and then we'd see who'd win."

"I'n got a halfpenny o' my own," said Bob proudly, coming out of the water and tossing his halfpenny in the air. "Yeads or tails ?"

"Tails," said Tom, instantly fired with the desire to win.

"It's yeads" said Bob hastily, snatching up the halfpenny as it fell.

"It wasn't," said Tom loudly and peremptorily. "You give me the halfpenny—I've won it fair."

"I shan't," said Bob, holding it tight in his pocket.

"Then I'll make you—see if I don't," said Tom.

"You can't make me do nothing, you can't," said Bob.

"Yes I can."

"No you can't."

"I'm master."

"I don't care for you."

"But I'll make you care, you cheat," said Tom, collaring Bob and shaking him.

"You get out wi' you," said Bob, giving Tom a kick.

Tom's blood was thoroughly up: he went at Bob with a lunge and threw him down, but Bob seized hold and kept it like a cat, and pulled Tom down, after him. They struggled fiercely on the ground for a moment or two till Tom, pinning Bob down by the shoulders, thought he had mastery.

"You say you'll give me the halfpenny now," he said, with difficulty, while he exerted himself to keep the command of Bob's arms.

But at this moment, Yap, who had been running on before, returned barking to the scene of action, and saw a favourable opportunity for biting Bob's bare leg not only with impunity but with honour. The pain from Yap's teeth, instead of surprising Bob into a relaxation of his hold, gave it a fiercer tenacity, and, with a new exertion of his force, he pushed Tom backward and got uppermost. But now Yap, who could get no sufficient purchase before, set his teeth in a new place, so that Bob, harassed in this way, let go his hold of Tom, and, almost throttling Yap, flung him into the river. By this time Tom was up again, and before Bob had quite recovered his balance after the act of swinging Yap, Tom fell upon him, threw him down, and got his knees firmly on Bob's chest.

"You give me the halfpenny now," said Tom.

"Take it," said Bob sulkily.

"No, I shan't take it ; you give me."

Bob took the halfpenny out of his pocket and threw it away from him on the ground.

Tom loosed his hold, and left Bob to rise.

"There the halfpenny lies," he said. "I don't want your halfpenny ; I wouldn't have kept it. But you wanted to cheat : I hate a cheat. I shan't go along with you any more," he added, turning round homeward, not without casting a regret towards the rat-catching and other pleasures which he must relinquish along with Bob's society.

Chapter 7

ENTER THE AUNTS AND UNCLES

The Dodsons were certainly a handsome family, and Mrs. Glegg was not the least handsome of the sisters. As she sat in Mrs. Tulliver's armchair, no impartial observer could have denied that for a woman of fifty she had a very comely face and figure, though Tom and Maggie considered their aunt Glegg as the type of ugliness.

Mrs. Glegg held her large gold watch in her hand with the many doubled chain round her fingers, and observed to Mrs. Tulliver, who had just returned from a visit to the kitchen, that whatever it might be by other people's clocks and watches, it was gone half-past twelve by hers.

"I don't know what ails sister Pullet," she continued. "It used to be the way in our family for one to be as early as another—I'm sure it was so in my poor father's time—and not for one sister to sit half an hour before the others came. But if the ways o' the family are altered, it shan't be *my* fault—*I'll* never be the one to come into a house when all rest are going away. I wonder *at* sister Deane—she used to be more like me. But if you'll take my advice, Bessy, you'll put the dinner forrard a bit, sooner than put it back, because folks are late as ought to ha' known better."

"O dear, there's no fear but what they'll be all here in time,

sister," said Mrs. Tulliver in her mild-peevish tone. "The dinner won't be ready till half-past one. But if it's long for you to wait, let me fetch you a cheese-cake and a glass o' wine."

"Well, Bessy!" said Mrs. Glegg, with a bitter smile and a scarcely perceptible toss of her head, "I should ha' thought you'd know your own sister better. I never *did* eat between meals, and I'm not going to begin. Not but what I hate that nonsense of having your dinner at half-past one, when you might have it at one. You was never brought up in that way, Bessy."

"Why, Jane, what can I do? Mr. Tulliver doesn't like his dinner before two o'clock, but I put it half an hour earlier because o' you."

Sister Pullet was in tears when the one-horse chaise stopped before Mrs. Tulliver's door, and it was apparently requisite that she should shed a few more before getting out, for though her husband Mrs. Tulliver stood ready to support her, she sat still and shook her head sadly, as she looked through her tears at the vague distance.

"Why, whativer is the matter, sister?" said Mrs. Tulliver. She was not an imaginative woman but it occurred to her that the large toilet glass in sister Pullet's best bedroom was possibly broken for the second time.

"Well, sister, you're late; what's the matter?" said Mrs. Glegg rather sharply, as they shook hands.

Mrs. Pullet sat down lifting up her mantle carefully behind before she answered—

"She's gone," unconsciously using an impressive figure of rhetoric.

"It isn't the glass this time, then," thought Mrs. Tulliver.

"Died the day before yesterday," continued Mrs. Pullet; "an' her legs was as thick as my body," she added with deep sadness, after a pause. "They'd tapped her no end o' times, and the water,—they say you might ha' swum in it if you'd liked."

"Well, Sophy, it's a mercy she's gone, then, whoiver she may be," said Mrs. Glegg with the promptitude and emphasis

of a mind naturally clear and decided; "but I can't think who you're talking of, for my part."

"But *I* know," said Mrs. Pullet, sighing and shaking her head; "and there isn't another such a dropsy in the parish. *I* know as it's old Mrs. Sutton o' the Twentylands."

"Well, she's no kin o' yours, nor much acquaintance as I've ever heared of," said Mrs. Glegg, who always cried just as much as was proper when anything happened to her own "kin", but not on other occasions.

"She's so much acquaintance as I've seen her legs when they was like bladders......And an old lady as had doubled her money over and over again, and kept it all in her own management to the last, and had her pocket with her keys in under her pillow constant. There isn't many old *par*ish'ners like her, I doubt."

"And they say she'd took as much physic as 'ud fill a waggon," observed Mr. Pullet.

"Ah," sighed Mrs. Pullet, "she'd another complaint ever so many years before she had the dropsy, and the doctors couldn't make out what it was. And she said to me, when I went to see her last Christmas, she said, 'Mrs. Pullet, if iver you have the dropsy, you'll think o' me.' She *did* say so." added Mrs. Pullet, beginning to cry bitterly again; "those were her very words. And she's to be buried o' Saturday, and Pullet's bid to the funeral."

"Sophy," said Mrs. Glegg, unable any longer to contain her spirit of rational remonstrance—"Sophy, I wonder *at* you, fretting and injuring your health about people as don't belong to you. Your poor father never did so, nor your aunt Frances neither, nor any o' the family as I ever heared of. You couldn't fret no more than this if we'd heared as our cousin Abbott had died sudden without making his will."

Mrs. Pullet was silent, having to finish her crying, and rather flattered than indignant at being upbraided for crying too much. It was not everybody who could afford to cry so much about their neighbours who had left them nothing; but Mrs. Pullet had married a gentleman farmer, and had leisure

and money to carry her crying and everything else to the highest pitch of respectability.

Of all her sisters, Mrs. Tulliver certainly preferred her sister Pullet, not without a return of preference ; but Mrs. Pullet was sorry Bessy had those naughty awkward children ; she would do the best she could by them, but it was a pity they weren't as good and as pretty as sister Deane's child. Maggie and Tom, on their part, thought their aunt Pullet tolerable chiefly because she was not their aunt Glegg. Tom always declined to go more than once during his holidays to see either of them : both his uncles tipped him that once of course ; but at his aunt Pullet's there were a great many toads to pelt in the cellar area, so that he preferred the visit to her. Maggie shuddered at the toads, and dreamed of them horribly, but she liked her uncle Pullet's muscial snuff-box. Still, it was agreed by the sisters, in Mrs. Tulliver's absence, that the Tulliver blood did not mix well with the Dodson blood ; that, in fact, poor Bessy's children were Tullivers, and that Tom, notwithstanding he had the Dodson complexion, was likely to be as "contrairy" as his father. As for Maggie, she was the picture of her aunt Moss, Mr. Tulliver's sister—a large-boned woman, who had married as poorly as could be ; had no china, and had a husband who had much ado to pay his rent. But when Mrs. Pullet was alone with Mrs. Tulliver upstairs, the remarks were naturally to the disadvantage of Mrs. Glegg, and they agreed, in confidence, that there was no knowing what sort of fright sister Jane would come out next. But their *tete-a-tete* was curtailed by the appearance of Mrs. Deane with little Lucy ; and Mrs. Tulliver had to look on with a silent pang while Lucy's blond curls were adjusted. It was quite unaccountable that Mrs. Deane, the thinnest and sallowest of all the Miss Dodsons, should have had this child, who might have been taken for Mrs. Tulliver's any day. And Maggie always looked twice as dark as usual when she was by the side of Lucy.

"Heyday !" said aunt Glegg, with loud emphasis. "Do little boys and gells come into a room without taking notice o' their uncles and aunts ? That wasn't the way when *I* was a little gell."

"Go and speak to your aunts and uncles, my dears," said

Mrs. Tulliver, looking anxious and melancholy. She wanted to whisper to Maggie a command to go and have her hair brushed.

"Well, and how do you do ? And I hope you're good children, are you ?" said aunt Glegg, in the same loud emphatic way, as she took their hands, hurting them with her large rings, and kissing their cheeks much against their desire. "Look up, Tom, look up. Boys as go to boarding-schools should hold their heads up. Look at me now." Tom declined that pleasure apparently, for he tried to draw his hand away. "Put your hair behind your ears, Maggie, and keep your frock on your shoulder."

Aunt Glegg always spoke to them in this loud emphatic way, as if she considered them deaf, or perhaps rather idiotic : it was a means, she thought, of making them feel that they were accountable creatures, and might be a salutary check on naughty tendencies. Bessy's children were so spoiled—they'd need have somebody to make them feel their duty.

"Well, my dears," said aunt Pullet, in a compassionate voice, "you grow wonderful fast. I doubt they'll outgrow their strength" she added, looking over their heads with a melancholy expression at their mother.. "I think the gell has too much hair. I'd have it thinned and cut shorter, sister, if I was you : it isn't good for the health. It's that as makes her skin so brown, I shouldn't wonder. Don't you think so, sister Deane ?"

"I can't say, I'm sure, sister" said Mrs. Deane, shutting her lips close again, and looking at Maggie with a critical eye.

"No, no," said Mr. Tulliver, "the child's healthy enough—there's nothing ails her. There's red wheat as well as white for that matter, and some like the dark grain best. But it 'ud be as well if Bessy 'ud have the child's hair cut, so as it 'ud lie smooth."

A dreadful resolve was gathering in Maggie's breast, but it was arrested by the desire to know from her aunt Deane whether she would leave Lucy behind : aunt Deane would hardly ever let Lucy come to see them. After various reasons for refusal, Mrs. Deane appealed to Lucy herself.

"You would't like to stay behind without mother, should you, Lucy."

"Yes, please, mother," said Lucy timidly, blushing very pink all over her little neck.

"Well done, Lucy! Let her stay, Mrs. Deane, let her stay," said Mr. Deane, a large but alert-looking man, with a type of physique to be seen in all ranks of English society—bald crown, red whiskers, full forehead, and general solidity without heaviness. You may see noblemen like Mr. Deane, and you may see grocers or day-labourers like him; but the keenness of his brown eyes was less common than his contour. He held a silver snuff-box very tightly in his hand, and now and then exchanged a pinch with Mr. Tulliver, whose box was only silver-mounted, so that it was naturally a joke between them that Mr. Tulliver wanted to exchange snuff-boxes also. Mr. Deane's box had been given him by the superior partners in the firm to which he belonged, at the same time that they gave him a share in the business, in acknowledgment of his valuable services as manager. No man was thought more highly of in St. Ogg's than Mr. Deane, and some persons were even of opinion that Miss Susan Dodson, who was held to have made the worst match of all the Dodson sisters, might one day ride in a better carriage, and live in a better house, even than her sister Pullet. There was no knowing where a man would stop, who had got his foot into a great mill-owning, ship-owning business like that of Guest & Co., with a banking concern attached. And Mrs. Deane, as her intimate female friends observed, was proud and "having" enough: *she* wouldn't let her husband stand still in the world for want of spurring.

"Maggie," said Mrs. Tulliver, beckoning Maggie to her and whispering in her ear as soon as this point of Lucy's staying was settled, "go and get your hair brushed—do, for shame. I told you not to come in without going to Martha first; you know I did."

"Tom, come out with me," whispered Meggie, pulling his sleeve as she passed him; and Tom followed willingly enough.

"Come upstairs with me, Tom," she whispered, when they were outside the door. "There's something I want to do before dinner."

"There's no time to play at anything before dinner," said Tom, whose imagination was impatient of any intermediate prospect.

"O, yes, there is time for this—*do*, come, Tom.

Tom followed Maggie upstairs into her mother's room, and saw her go at once to a drawer, from which she took out a large pair of scissors.

"What are they for, Maggie?" said Tom, feeling his curiosity awakened.

Maggie answered by seizing her front locks and cutting them straight across the middle of her forehead.

"O, my buttons, Maggie, you'll catch it!" exclaimed Tom; "you'd better not cut any more off."

Snip! went the great scissors again while Tom was speaking; and he couldn't help feeling it was rather good fun: Maggie would look so queer.

"Here, Tom, cut it behind for me," said Maggie, excited by her own daring, and anxious to finish the deed.

"You'll catch it, you know," said Tom, nodding his head in an admonitory manner, and hesitating a little as he took the scissors.

"Never mind—make haste!" said Maggie, giving a little stamp with her foot. Her cheeks were quite flushed.

The black locks were so thick—nothing could be more tempting to a lad who had already tasted the forbidden pleasure of cutting the pony's mane. I speak to those who know the satisfaction of making a pair of shears meet through a duly resisting mass of hair. One delicious grinding snip, and then another and another, and the hinder locks fell heavily on the floor, and Maggie stood cropped in a jagged uneven manner, but with a sense of clearness and freedom, as if she had emerged from a wood into the open plain.

"O, Maggie," said Tom, jumping round her, and slapping his knees as he laughed, "O, my buttons, what a queer thing

you look! Look at yourself in the glass—you look like the idiot we throw our nutshells to at school."

Maggie felt an unexpected pang. She had thought beforehand chiefly of her own deliverance from her teasing hair and teasing remarks about it, and something also of the triumph she should have over her mother and her aunts by this very decided course of action: she didn't want her hair to look pretty—that was out of the question—she only wanted people to think her a clever little girl, and not to find fault with her. But, now, when Tom began to laugh at her, and say she was like the idiot, the affair had quite a new aspect. She looked in the glass, and still Tom laughed and clapped his hands, and Maggie's flushed cheeks began to pale, and her lips to tremble a little.

"O Maggie, you'll have to go down to dinner directly," said Tom, "O my!"

"Don't laugh at me, Tom," said Maggie, in a passionate tone, with an outburst of angry tears, stamping, and giving him a push.

"Now, then, spitfire!" said Tom. "What did you cut it off for, then? I shall go down: I can smell the dinner going in."

"Why, she's gone and cut her hair herself," said Mr. Tulliver in an undertone to Mr. Deane, laughing with much enjoyment. "Did you ever know such a little hussy as it is?"

"Why, little miss, you've made yourself look very funny," said uncle Pullet, and perhaps he never in his life made an observation which was felt to be so lacerating.

"Fie, for shame!" said aunt Glegg in her loudest, severest tone of reproof. "Little gells as cut their own hair should be whipped and fed on bread and water—not come and sit down with their aunts and uncles."

"Ay, ay," said uncle Glegg, meaning to give a playful turn to his denunciation, "she must be sent to jail, I think, and they'll cut the rest of her hair off there, and make it all even."

"She's more like a gypsy nor ever," said aunt Pullet, in a pitying tone; "it's very bad luck, sister, as the gell should be

so brown—the boy's fair enough. I doubt it'll stand in her way i' life, to be so brown."

"She's a naughty child, as'll break her mother's heart," said Mrs. Tulliver with the tears in her eyes.

Maggie seemed to be listening to a chorus of reproach and derision. Her first flush came from anger, which gave her a transient power of defiance, and Tom thought she was braving it out, supported by the recent appearance of the pudding and custard. Under this impression he whispered, "O my! Maggie, I told you you'd catch it." He meant to be friendly, but Maggie felt convinced that Tom was rejoicing in her ignominy. Her feeble power of defiance left her in an instant, her heart swelled, and, getting up from her chair, she ran to her father, hid her face on his shoulders, and burst out into loud sobbing.

"Come, come, my wench," said her father, soothingly, putting his arm around her, "never mind; you was i' the right to cut it off if it plagued you; give over crying: father'll take your part."

Delicious words of tenderness! Maggie never forgot any of these moments when her father "took her part"; she kept them in her heart, and thought of them long years after, when everyone else said that her father had done very ill by his children.

"Mr. Tulliver," said, Mrs. Tulliver, interrupting her husband in his talk, "it's time now to tell the children's aunts and uncles what you're thinking of doing with Tom, isn't it?"

"Very well," said Mr. Tulliver rather sharply, "I've no objections to tell anybody what I mean to do with him. I've settled," he added, looking towards Mr. Glegg and Mr. Deane —"I've settled to send him to Mr. Stelling, a parson, down at King's Lorton, there—an uncommon clever fellow, I understand—as'll put him up to most things."

Uncle Pullet had a great natural faculty for ignorance. He was the first to give utterance to his astonishment.

"Why, what can you be going to send him to a parson for?" he said with an amazed twinkling in his eyes, looking at Mr. Glegg and Mr. Deane, to see if they showed any signs of comprehension.

"Why, because the parsons are the best schoolmasters, by what I can make out," said poor Mr. Tulliver, who, in the maze of this puzzling world, laid hold of any clue with great readiness and tenacity. "Jacobs at th' academy's no parson, and he's done very bad by the boy ; and I made up my mind, if I sent him to school again, it should be to somebody different to Jacobs. And this Mr. Stelling, by what I can make out is the sort o' man I want. And I mean my boy to go to him in Midsummer," he concluded in a tone of decision, tapping his snuff-box and taking a pinch.

"You'll have to pay a swimming half-yearly bill then, eh, Tulliver ? The clergymen have highish notions, in general," said Mr. Deane, taking snuff vigorously, as he always did when wishing to maintain a neutral position.

"What ! do you think the parson'll teach him to know a good sample o' wheat when he sees it, neighbour Tulliver ?" said Mr. Glegg, who was fond of his jest ; and, having retired from business, felt that it was not only allowable but becoming in him to take a playful view of things.

"Mr. Glegg, I wonder *at* you," said his wife. "It's very unbecoming in a man o' your age and belongings."

"What's unbecoming, Mrs. G ?" said Mr. Glegg, winking pleasantly at the company. "My new blue coat as I've got on ?"

"I pity your weakness, Mr. Glegg. I say it's unbecoming to be making a joke when you see your own kin going headlong to ruin."

"If you mean me by that," said Mr. Tulliver, considerably nettled "you needn't trouble yourself to fret about me. I can manage my own affairs without troubling other folks."

"Bless me," said Mr. Deane, judiciously introducing a new idea, "why, now I come to think of it, somebody said Wakem was going to send *his* son—the deformed lad—to a clergyman, didn't they, Susan ?" (appealing to his wife).

I can give no account of it, I'm sure," said Mrs. Deane, closing her lips very tightly again. Mrs. Deane was not a woman to take part in a scene where missiles were flying.

"Well," said Mr. Tulliver, speaking all the more cheerfully that Mrs. Glegg might see he didn't mind her, "if Wakem thinks o' sending his son to a clergyman, depend on it I shall make no mistake i' sending Tom to one. Wakem's as big a scoundrel as old Harry ever made, but he knows the length of every man's foot he's got to deal with. Ay, tell me who's Wakem's butcher, and I'll tell you where to get your meat."

"But lawyer Wakem's son's got a hump-back," said Mrs. Pullet, who felt as if the whole business had a funereal aspect; "it's more nat'ral to send *him* to a clergyman."

"Yes," said Mr. Glegg, interpreting Mrs. Pullet's observation with erroneous plausibility, "you must consider that, neighbour Tulliver; Wakem's son isn't likely to follow any business. Wakem 'ull make a gentleman of him, poor fellow."

"Mr. Glegg," said Mrs. G., in a tone which implied that her indignation would fizz and ooze a little, though she was determined to keep it corked up, "you'd far better hold your tongue. Mr. Tulliver doesn't want to know your opinion nor mine neither. There's folks in the world as know better than everybody else.".

"Why, I should think that's you, if we're to trust your own tale," said Mr. Tulliver, beginning to boil up again.

"O, *I* say nothing," said Mrs. Glegg sarcastically. "My advice has never been asked, and I don't give it."

"It'll be the first time, then," said Mr. Tulliver. "It's the only thing you're over-ready at giving."

"I've been over-ready at lending, then, if I haven't been over-ready at giving," said Mrs. Glegg. "There's folks I've lent money to, as perhaps I shall repent o' lending money to kin."

"Come, come, come," said Mr. Glegg, soothingly. But Mr. Tulliver was not to be hindered of his retort.

"You've got a bond for it, I reckon," he said; "and you've had your five per cent, kin or no kin."

"Sister," said Mrs. Tulliver pleadingly, "drink your wine, and let me give you some almonds and raisins."

"Bessy, I'm sorry for you," said Mrs. Glegg, very much with the feeling of a cur that seizes the opportunity of diverting his bark towards the man who carries no stick. "It's poor work, talking o' almonds and raisins."

"Lors, sister Glegg, don't be so quarrelsome," said Mrs. Pullet, beginning to cry a little. "You may be struck with a fit, getting so red in the face after dinner, and we are but just out o' mourning all of us—and all wi' growns craped alike and just put by—it's very bad among sisters."

"I should think it *is* bad," said Mrs. Glegg. "Things are come to a fine pass when one sister invites the other to her house o' purpose to quarrel with her and abuse her."

"Softly, softly, Jane—be reasonable—be reasonable," said Mr. Glegg.

But while he was speaking, Mr. Tulliver, who had by no means said enough to satisfy his anger, burst out again.

"Who wants to quarrel with you?" he said. "It's you as can't let people alone, but must be gnawing at 'em for evert *I* should never want to quarrel with any woman, if she kep. her place."

"My place, indeed!" said Mrs. Glegg, getting rather more shrill. "There's your betters, Mr. Tulliver, as are dead and in their grave, treated me with a different sort o' respect to what you do—*though* I've got a husband as'll sit by and see me abused by them as 'ud never ha' had the chance if there hadn't been them in our family as married worse than they might ha' done."

"If you talk o' that," said Mr. Tulliver, "my family's as good as yours—and better, for it hasn't got a damned ill-tempered woman in it."

"Well!" said Mrs. Glegg, rising from her chair. "I don't know whether you think it's a fine thing to sit by and hear me swore at, Mr. Glegg; but I'm not going to stay a minute longer in this house. You can stay behind, and come home with the gig—and I'll walk home."

"Dear heart, dear heart!" said Mr. Glegg in a melancholy tone as he followed his wife out of the room.

"Mr. Tulliver, how could you talk so ?" said Mrs. Tulliver, with the tears in her eyes.

"Let her go," said Mr. Tulliver, too hot to be damped by any amount of tears. "Let her go, and the sooner the better : she won't be trying to domineer over *me* again in a hurry."

"Sister Pullet," said Mrs. Tulliver, helplessly, "do you think it 'ud be any use for you to go after her and try to pacify her ?"

"Better not, better not," said Mr. Deane. "You'll make it up another day."

"Then, sisters, shall we go and look at the children ?" said Mrs. Tulliver, drying her eyes.

No proposition could have been more seasonable. Mr. Tulliver felt very much as if the air had been cleared of obtrusive flies now the women were out of the room. There were few things he liked better than a chat with Mr. Deane, whose close application to business allowed the pleasure very rarely. Mr. Deane, he considered, was the "knowingest" man of his acquaintance, and he had besides a ready causticity of tongue that made an agreeable supplement to Mr. Tulliver's own tendency that way, which had remained in rather an inarticulate condition. And now the women were gone, they could carry on their serious talk without frivolous interruption. They could exchange their views concerning the Duke of Wellington, whose conduct in the Catholic Question had thrown such an entirely new light on his character ; and speak slightingly of his conduct at the battle of Waterloo, which he would never have won if there hadn't been a great many Englishmen at his back, not to speak of Blucher and the Prussians, who, as Mr. Tulliver had heard from a person of particular knowledge in that matter, had come up in the very nick of time.

Uncle Pullet sat by and listened with twinkling eyes to these high matters. He didn't understand politics himself—thought they were a natural gift—but by what he could make out, this Duke of Wellington was no better than he should be.

Chapter 8

MR. TULLIVER SHOWS HIS WEAKER SIDE

"Suppose sister Glegg should call her money in—it 'ud be very awkward for you to have to raise five hundred pounds, now," said Mrs. Tulliver to her husband that evening, as she took a plaintive review of the day.

Mrs. Tulliver had lived thirteen years with her husband, yet she retained in all the freshness of her early married life a facility of saying things which drove him in the opposite direction to the one she desired.

This observation of hers tended directly to convice Mr. Tulliver that it would not be at all awkward for him to raise five hundred pounds and when Mrs. Tulliver became rather pressing to know *how* he would raise it without mortgaging the mill and the house, which he had said he never *would* mortgage, since nowadays people were none so ready to lend money without security, Mr. Tulliver, getting warm, declared that Mrs. Glegg might do as she liked about calling in her money—he should pay it in, whether or not. He was not going to be beholding to his wife's sisters.

Mrs. Tulliver cried a little in a trickling quiet way as she put on her nightcap; but presently sank into a comfortable sleep, lulled by the thought that she would talk everything over with her sister Pullet to-morrow, when she was to take the children to Garum Firs to tea. Not that she looked forward to any distinct issue from that talk; but it seemed impossible that past events should be so obstinate as to remain unmodified when they were complained against.

Her husband lay awake rather longer, for he too was thinking of a visit he would pay on the morrow, and his ideas on the subject were not of so vague and soothing a kind as those of his amiable partner.

Mr. Tulliver when under the influence of a strong feeling had a promptitude in action that may seem inconsistent with that painful sense of the complicated puzzling nature of human affairs under which his more dispassionate deliberations were

conducted; but it is really not improbable that there was a direct relation between these apparently contradictory phenomena, since I have observed that for getting a strong impression that a skein is tangled, there is nothing like snatching hastily at a single thread. It was owing to this promptitude that Mr. Tulliver was on horseback soon after dinner the next day (he was not dyspeptic) on his way to Basset to see his sister Moss and her husband. For having made up this mind irrevocably that he would pay Mr. Glegg her loan of five hundred pounds, it naturally occurred to him that he had a promissory note for three hundred pounds lent to his brother-in-law Moss, and if said brother-in-law could manage to pay in the money within a given time, it would go far to lessen the fallacious air of inconvenience which Mr. Tulliver's spirited step might have worn in the eyes of weak people who require to know precisely *how* a thing is to be done before they are strongly confident that it will be easy.

For Mr. Tulliver was in a position neither new nor striking, but, like other everyday things, sure to have a cumulative effect that will be felt in the long run: he was held to be a much more substantial man than he really was. And as we are all apt to believe what the world believes about us, it was his habit to think of failure and ruin with the same sort of remote pity with which a spare long-necked man hears that his plethoric short-necked neighbour is stricken with apoplexy. He had been always used to hear pleasant jokes about his advantages as a man who worked his own mill, and owned a pretty bit of land; and these jokes naturally kept up his sense that he was a man of considerable substance. They gave a pleasant flavour to his glass on a market-day, and if it had not been for the recurrence of half-yearly payments, Mr. Tulliver would really have forgotten that there was a mortgage of two thousand pounds on his very desirable freehold. That was not altogether his own fault, since one of the thousand pounds was his sister's fortune, which he had had to pay on her marriage; and a man who has neighbours that *will* go to law with him, is not likely to pay off his mortgages, especially if he enjoys the good opinion of acquaintances who want to borrow a hundred pounds on security too lofty to be represented by parchment. Our friend Mr. Tulliver had a good-natured

fibre in him, and did not like to give harsh refusals even to a sister, who had not only come into the world in that superfluous way characteristic of sisters, creating a necessity for mortgages, but had quite thrown herself away in marriage, and had crowned her mistakes by having an eighth baby.

Mrs. Moss heard the sound of the horse's feet, and when her brother rode up, was already outside the kitchen door, with a half-weary smile on her face, and a black-eyed baby in her arms. Mrs. Moss's face bore a faded resemblance to her brother's; baby's little fat hand, pressed against her cheek, seemed to show more strikingly that the cheek was faded.

"Brother, I'm glad to see you," she said in an affectionate tone. "I did't look for you to-day. How do you do?"

"Oh—pretty well, Mrs. Moss—pretty well," answered the brother, with cool deliberation, as if it were rather too forward of her to ask that question. She knew at once that her brother was not in a good humour: he never called her Mrs. Moss except when he was angry, and when they were in company. But she thought it was in the order of nature that people who were poorly off should be snubbed. Mrs. Moss did not take her stand on the equality of the human race: she was a patient, prolific, loving-hearted woman.

"Your husband isn't in the house, I suppose?" added Mr. Tulliver, after a grave pause, during which four children had run out, like chickens whose mother has been suddenly in eclipse behind the hencoop.

"No," said Mrs. Moss, "but he's only in the potato-field yonders. Geogry, run to the Far Close in a minute, and tell father your uncle's come. You'll get down brother, won't you, and take something?"

"No, no; I can't get down, I must be going home again directly," said Mr. Tulliver, looking at the distance.

"Ay, ay, Gritty," said the miller, with a new softness in his tone, "but I've allays done what I could for you," he added, as if vindicating himself from a reproach.

"I'm not denying that, brother, and I'am noways ungrateful," said poor Mrs. Moss, too fagged by toil and children

to have strength left for any pride. "But there's the father. What a while you've been, Moss ?"

"While, do you call it ?" said Mr. Moss, feeling out of breath and injured. "I've been running all the way. Won't you 'light, Mr. Tulliver ?"

"Well, I'll just get down, and have a bit o' talk with you in the garden," said Mr. Tulliver feeling that he should be more likely to show a due spirit of resolve if his sister were not present.

He got down, and passed with Mr. Moss into the garden towards an old yew-tree arbour, while his sister stood tapping her baby on the back and looking wistfully after them.

Mr. Tulliver sat down on the bench, and tapping the ground curiously here and there with his stick, as if he suspected some hollowness, opened the conversation by observing, with something like a snarl in his tone—

"Why, you've got wheat again in that Corner Close, I see ; and never a bit o' dressing on it. You'll do no good with it this year."

Mr. Moss who, when he married Miss Tulliver, had been regarded as the buck of Basset, now wore a beard nearly a week old, and had the depressed, unexpectant air of a machine-horse. He answered in a patient-grumbling tone, "Why, poor farmers like me must do as they can ; they must leave it to them as have got money to play with, to put half as much into the ground as they mean to get out of it."

"I don't know who should have money to play with, if it isn't them as can borrow money without paying interest," said Mr. Tulliver, who wished to get into a slight quarrel ; it was the most natural and cosy introduction to calling in money.

"I know I'm behind with the interest," said Mr. Moss, "but I was so unlucky wi' the wool last year ; and what with the Missis being laid up so, things have gone awk'arder nor usual."

"Ay," snarled Mr. Tulliver, "there's folks as things 'ull

allays go awk'ard with: empty sacks 'ull never stand upright."

"Well, I don't know what fault you've got to find wi' me, Mr. Tulliver," said Mr. Moss deprecatingly; "I know there isn't a day-labourer works harder."

"What's the use o' that," said Mr. Tulliver, sharply "when a man marries an's got no capital to work his farm but his wife's bit o' fortin? I was against it from the first; but you'd neither of you listen to me. And I can't lie out o' my money any longer, for I've got to pay five hundred o' Mrs. Glegg's and there 'ull be Tom an expense to me, as I should find myself short even saying I'd got back all as is my own. You must look about and see how you can pay me the three hundred pounds."

"Well, if that's what you mean," said Mr. Moss, looking blankly before him, "we'd better be sold up, and ha' done with it: I must part wi' every head o' stock I'n got, to pay you and the landlord too."

"Well, you must do as you can. I can't find money for everybody else as well as myself. I must look to my own business, and my own family. I can't lie out o' my money any longer. You must raise it as quick as you can."

Mr. Tulliver walked abruptly out of the arbour as he uttered the last sentence, and, without looking round at Mr. Moss, went on to the kitchen door, where the eldest boy was holding his horse, and his sister was waiting in a state of wondering alarm, which was not without its alleviations, for baby was making pleasant gurgling sounds, and performing a great deal of finger practice on the faded face. Mrs. Moss had eight chlldren, but could never overcome her regret that the twins had not lived. Mr. Moss thought their removal was not without its consolations. "Won't you come in, brother?" she said, looking anxiously at her busband, who was walking slowly up, while Mr. Tulliver had his foot already in the stirrup.

"No, no; good-bye," said he, turning his horse's head, and riding away.

No man could feel more resolute till he got outside the yard-gate, and a little way along the deep-rutted lane : but before he reached the next turning, which would take him out of sight of the dilapidated farm-buildings, he appeared to be smitten by some sudden thought. He checked his horse, and made it stand still in the same spot for two or three minutes, during which he turned his head from side to side in a melancholy way, as if he were looking at some painful object on more sides than one. Evidently, after his fit of promptitude, Mr. Tulliver was relapsing into the sense that this is a puzzling world. He turned his horse, and rode slowly back, giving vent to the climax of feelings which had determined this movement by saying aloud, as he struck his horse, "Poor little wench ! she'll have nobody but Tom, belike, when I'm gone."

Mr. Tulliver's return into the yard was descried by several young Mosses, who immediately ran in with the exciting news to their mother, so that Mrs. Moss was again on the door-step when her brother rode up. She had been crying, but was rocking baby to sleep in her arms now, and made no ostentatious show of sorrow as her brother looked at her, but merely said—

"The father's gone to the field again, if you want him, brother."

"No, Gritty, no," said Mr. Tulliver, in a gentle tone, "Don't you fret—that's all—I'll make a shift without the money a bit—only you must be as cliver and contriving as you can."

Mrs. Moss's tears came again at this unexpected kindness, and she could say nothing.

"Come, come !—the little wench shall come and see you. I'll bring her and Tom some day before he goes to school. You mustn't fret—I'll allays be a good brother to you."

And so the respectable miller returned along the Basset lanes rather more puzzled than before as to ways and means but still with the sense of a danger escaped. It had come across his mind that if he were hard upon his sister, it might somehow tend to make Tom hard upon Maggie at some distant day, when her father was no longer there to take her part ; for simple

people, like our friend Mr. Tulliver, are apt to clothe unimpeachable feelings in erroneous ideas, and this was his confused way of explaining to himself that his love and anxiety for "the little wench" had given him a new sensibility towards his sister.

Chapter 9

TO GARUM FIRS

While the possible troubles of Maggie's future were occupying her father's mind, she herself was tasting only the bitterness of the present. Childhood has no forebodings ; but then, it is soothed by no memories of outlived sorrow.

The fact was, the day had begun ill with Maggie. The pleasure of having Lucy to look at, and the prospect of the afternoon visit to Garum Firs, where she would hear uncle Pullet's musical-box, had been marred as early as eleven o'clock by the advent of the hairdresser from St. Ogg's, who had spoken in the severest terms of the condition in which he had found her hair, holding up one jagged lock after another and saying, "See here ! tut—tut—tut !" in a tone of mingled disgust and pity, which to Maggie's imagination was equivalent to the strongest expression of public opinion.

As for Lucy, she was just as pretty and neat as she had been yesterday : no accidents ever happened to her clothes, and she was never uncomfortable in them, so that she looked with wondering pity at Maggie pouting and writhing under the exasperating tucker. Maggie would certainly have torn it off, if she had not been checked by the remembrance of her recent humiliation about her hair : as it was, she confined herself to fretting and twisting, and behaving peevishly about the card-houses which they were allowed to build till dinner, as a suitable amusement for boys and girls in their best clothes. Tom could build perfect pyramids of houses ; but Maggie's would never bear the laying on of the roof—it was always so with the things that Maggie made ; and Tom had deduced the conclusion that no girls could ever make anything. But it happened that Lucy proved wonderfully clever at building : she handled the cards so

lightly, and moved so gently, that Tom condescended to admire her houses as well as his own, the more readily because she had asked him to teach her. Maggie, too, would have admired Lucy's houses, and would have given up her own unsuccessful building to contemplate them, without ill-temper, if her tucker had not made her peevish, and if Tom had not inconsiderately laughed when her houses fell, and told her she was "a stupid."

"Don't laugh at me, Tom!" she burst out angrily, "I'm not a stupid. I know a great many things you don't."

"O, I daresay, Miss Spitfire! I'd never be such a cross thing as you—making faces like that. Lucy doesn't do so. I like Lucy better than you: *I* wish Lucy was *my* sister."

"Then it's very wicked and cruel of you to wish so," said Maggie, starting up hurriedly from her place on the floor and upsetting Tom's wonderful pagoda. She really did not mean it, but the circumstantial evidence was against her, and Tom turned white with anger, but said nothing: he would have struck her, only he knew it was cowardly to strike a girl, and Tom Tulliver was quite determined he would never do anything cowardly.

Maggie stood in dismay and terror while Tom got up from the floor and walked away, pale from the scattered ruins of his pagoda, and, Lucy looked on mutely, like a kitten pausing from its lapping.

"O Tom," said Maggie, at last, going half-way towards him, "I didn't mean to knock it down—indeed, indeed I didn't."

Thus the morning had been made heavy to Maggie, and Tom's persistent coldness to her all through their walk spoiled the fresh air and sunshine for her. He called Lucy to look at the half-built bird's nest without caring to show it to Maggie, and peeled a willow switch for Lucy and himself, without offering one to Maggie. Lucy had said, "Maggie, shouldn't *you* like one?" but Tom was deaf. Still the sight of the peacock opportunely spreading his tail on the stackyard wall, just as they reached Garum Firs, was enough to divert the mind temporarily from personal grievances.

Uncle Pullet had seen the expected party approaching from the window, and made haste to unbar and unchain the front door, kept always in this fortified condition from fear of tramps, who might be supposed to know of the glass case of stuffed birds in the hall, and to contemplate rushing in and carrying it away on their heads. Aunt Pullet, too, appeared at the door-way, and as soon as her sister was within hearing, said, "Stop the children, for God's sake, Bessy—don't let 'em come up the door-steps: Sally's bringing the old mat and the duster, to rub their shoes."

Mrs. Pullet's front-door mats were by no means intended to wipe shoes on: the very scraper had a deputy to do its dirty work. Tom rebelled particularly against this shoewiping, which he always considered in the light of an indignity to his sex. He felt it as the beginning of the disagreeables incident to a visit at aunt Pullet's, where he had once been compelled to sit with towels wrapped round his boots; a fact which may serve to correct the too hasty conclusion that a visit to Garum Firs must have been a great treat to a young gentleman fond of animals—fond, that is, of throwing stones at them.

"Mrs. Gray has sent home my new bonnet, Bessy," said Mrs. Pullet, in a pathetic tone, as Mrs. Tulliver adjusted her cap.

"Has she, sister?" said Mrs. Tulliver, with an air of much interest. "And how do you like it?"

"It's apt to make a mess with clothes, taking 'em out and putting 'em in again," said Mrs. Pullet, drawing a bunch of keys from her pocket and looking at them earnestly, "but it 'ud be a pity for you to go away without seeing it. There's no knowing what may happen."

Mrs. Pullet shook her head slowly at this last serious consideration, which determined her to single out a particular key.

"I'm afraid it'll be troublesome to you getting it out, sister," said Mrs. Tulliver, "but I' *should* like to see what sort of a crown she's made you."

Mrs. Pullet rose with a melancholy air and unlocked one wing of a very bright wardrobe, where you may have hastily

supposed she would find the new bonnet. Not at all. Such a supposition could only have arisen from a too superficial acquaintance with the habits of the Dodson family. In this wardrobe Mrs. Pullet was seeking something small enough to be hidden among layers of linen—it was a door-key.

"You must come with me into the best room," said Mrs. Pullet.

"You'd like to see it on, sister ?" she said sadly. "I'll open the shutter a bit further."

"Well if you don't mind taking off your cap sister," said Mrs. Tulliver.

Mrs. Pullet took off her cap, displaying the brown silk scalp with a jutting promontory of curls which was common to the more mature and judicious women of those times, and, placing the bonnet on her head, turned slowly round, like a draper's lay-figure, that Mrs. Tulliver might miss no point of view.

"I've sometimes thought there's a loop too much o' ribbon on this left side, sister ; what do you think ?" said Mrs. Pullet.

Mrs. Tulliver looked earnestly at the point indicated, and turned her head on one side. "Well, I think it's best as it is ; if you meddled with it, sister, you might repent."

"That's true," said aunt Pullet, taking off the bonnet and looking at it contemplatively.

"How much might she charge you for that bonnet, sister ?" said Mrs. Tulliver, whose mind was actively engaged on the possibility of getting a humble imitation of this *chef-d'oeuvre* made from a piece of silk she had at home.

Mrs. Pulllet screwed up her mouth and shook her head, and then whispered, "Pullet pays for it, he said I was to have the best bonnet at Garum Church, let the next best be whose it would."

"Ah, it's the way i' this world," said Mrs. Pullet, returning the bonnet to the wardrobe and locking it up. She maintained a silence characterized by head-shaking, until they had issued from the solemn chamber and were in her own room again. Then, beginning to cry, she said, "Sister, if you should never see

that bonnet again till I'm dead and gone, you'll remember I showed it you this day."

Mrs. Tulliver felt that she ought to be affected, but she was a woman of sparse tears, stout and healthy—she couldn't cry so much as her sister Pullet did, and had often felt her deficiency at funerals. Her effort to bring tears into her eyes issued in an old contraction of her face. Maggie, looking on attentively, felt that there was some painful mystery about her aunt's bonnet which she was considered too young to understand; indignantly conscious all the while that she could have understood that, as well as everything else, if she had been taken into confidence.

When they went down, uncle Pullet observed, with some acumen, that he reckoned the missis had been showing her bonnet—that was what had made them so long upstairs. With Tom the interval had seemed still longer, for he had been seated in irksome constraint on the edge of a sofa directly opposite his uncle Pullet, who regarded him with twinkling grey eyes, and occasionally addressed him as "Young sir."

"Well, young sir, what do you learn at school?" was a standing question with uncle Pullet; whereupon Tom always looked sheepish, rubbed his hand across his face, and answered, "I don't know". It was altogether so embarrassing to be seated *tete-a-tete* with uncle Pullet, that Tom could not even look at the prints on the walls, or the fly cages, or the wonderful flower-pots; he saw nothing but his uncle's gaiters. Not that Tom was in awe of his uncle's mental superiority; indeed, he had made up his mind that didn't want to be a gentleman farmer, because he shouldn't like to be such a thin-legged silly fellow as his uncle Pullet—a molly-coddle, in fact.

Mr. Pullet never rode anything taller than a low pony, and was the least predatory of men, considering firearms dangerous, as apt to go off of themselves by nobody's particular desire. So that Tom was not without strong reasons when, in a confidential talk with a chum, he had described uncle Pullet as a nincompoop, taking care at the same time to observe that he was a very "rich fellow".

The only alleviating circumstances in a *tete-a-tete* with uncle

Pullet was that he kept a variety of lozenges and peppermint drops about his person, and when at a loss for conversation he filled up the void by proposing a mutual solace of this kind.

"Do you like peppermints, young sir?" required only a tacit answer when it was accompanied by a presentation of the article in question.

The appearance of the little girls suggested to uncle Pullet the further solace of small sweet-cakes, of which he also kept a stock under lock and key for his own private eating on wet days; but the three children had no sooner got the tempting delicacy between their fingers than aunt Pullet desired them to abstain from eating it till the tray and the plates came, since with those crisp cakes they would make the floor "all over" crumbs. Lucy didn't mind that much, for the cake was so pretty, she thought it rather a pity to eat it, but Tom, watching his opportunity while the elders were talking, hastily stowed it in his mouth at two bites, and chewed it furtively. As for Maggie, becoming fascinated, as usual, by a print of Ulysses and Nausicaa, which uncle Pullet had bought as a "pretty Scripture thing," she presently let fall her cake, and in an unlucky movement crushed it beneath her foot—a source of so much agitation to aunt Pullet and conscious disgrace to Maggie that she began to despair of hearing the musical snuff-box today, till, after some reflection, it occurred to her that Lucy was in high favour enough to venture on asking for a tune. So she whispered to Lucy, and Lucy who always did what she was desired to do, went up quietly to her uncle's knee, and blushing all over her neck while she fingered her necklace, said, "Will you please play us a tune, uncle?"

Lucy thought it was by reason of some exceptional talent in uncle Pullet that the snuff-box played such beautiful tunes, and indeed the thing was viewed in that light by the majority of his neighbours in Garum. Mr. Pullet had *bought* the box, to begin with, and he understood winding it up and knew which tune it was going to play beforehand; altogether, the possession of this unique "piece of music" was a proof that Mr. Pullet's character was not of that entire nullity which might otherwise have been attributed to it. But uncle Pullet, when entreated to exhibit his accomplishment, never depreciated it by a too ready

consent, "We'll see about it," was the answer he always gave, carefully abstaining from any sign of compliance till a suitable number of minutes had passed. Uncle Pullet had a programme for all great social occasions, and in this way fenced himself in from much painful confusion and perplexing freedom of will.

Perhaps the suspense did heighten Maggie's enjoyment when the fairy tune began : for the first time she quite forgot that she had a load on her mind—that Tom was angry with her ; and by the time "Hush, ye pretty warbling choir", had been played, her face wore that bright look of happiness, while she sat immovable with her hands clasped, which sometimes comforted her mother with the sense that Maggie could look pretty now and then, in spite of her brown skin. But when the magic music ceased, she jumped up, and, running towards Tom, put her arm around his neck and said, "O, Tom, isn't it pretty ?"

Let you should think it showed a revolting insensibility in Tom that he felt any new anger towards Maggie for this uncalled-for, and to him, inexplicable caress, I must tell you that he had his glass of cowslip wine in his hand, and that she jerked him so as to make him spill half of it. He must have been an extreme milksop not to say angrily, "Look there, now!" especially when his resentment was sanctioned, as it was, by general disapprobation of Maggie's behaviour.

"Why don't you sit still, Maggie ?" her mother said peevishly.

"Little gells mustn't come to see me if they behave in that way," said aunt Pullet.

"Why, you're too rough, little miss," said uncle Pullet.

Poor Maggie sat down again, with the music all chased out of her soul and the seven small demons all in again.

Mrs. Tulliver's thoughts had been temporarily diverted from the quarrel with Mrs. Glegg by millinery and maternal cares, but now the great theme of the bonnet was thrown into perspective, yesterday's anxieties recurred.

"It weighs on my mind so as never was," she said, by way of opening the subject, "sister Glegg's leaving the house in that way. I'm sure I'd no wish t' offend a sister."

"Ah," said aunt Pullet, "there's no accounting for what Jane 'ull do. I wouldn't speak of it out o' the family—if it wasn't to Dr. Turnbull; but it's my belief Jane lives too low. I've said so to Pullet often and often, and he knows it."

"Why, you said so last Monday was a week, when we came away from drinking tea with 'em," said Mr. Pullet, beginning to nurse his knee and shelter it with his pocket-handkerchief, as was his way when the conversation took an interesting turn.

"Very like I did," said Mrs. Pullet, "for you remember when I said things better than I can remember myself. He's got a wonderful memory, Pullet has," she continued, looking pathetically at her sister. "I should be poorly off if he was to have a stroke, for he always remembers when I've got to take my doctor's stuff—and I'm taking three sorts now."

"There's the 'pills as before' every other night, and the new drops at eleven and four, and the 'fervescing mixture 'when agreeable'," rehearsed Mr. Pullet, with a punctuation determined by a lozenge on his tongue.

"Ah, perhaps it 'ud be better for sister Glegg if *she'd* go to the doctor sometimes, instead o' chewing Turkey rhubarb whenever there's anything the matter with her," said Mrs. Tulliver, who naturally saw the wide subject of medicine chiefly in relation to Mrs. Glegg.

"It's dreadful to think on," said aunt Pullet, raising her hands and letting them fall again, "people playing with their own insides in that way! And it's flying i' the face o' Providence; for what are the doctors for, if we aren't to call 'em in? And when folks have got the money to pay for a doctor, it isn't respectable, as I've told Jane many a time. I'm ashamed of acquintance knowing it."

"Well, *we've* no call to be ashamed," said Mr. Pullet, "for Doctor Turnbull hasn't got another such patient as you i' this parish, now old Mrs. Sutton's gone."

"Pullet keeps all my physic bottles—did you know, Bessy?" said Mrs. Pullet. "He won't have one sold. He says it's nothing but right, folks should see 'em when I'm gone. They fill two o' the long storeroom shelves a'ready—but," she added,

beginning to cry, "it's well if they ever fill three. I may go before I've made up the dozen o' these last sizes. The pill-boxes are in the closet in my room—you'll remember that, sister—but there's nothing to show for the boluses, if it isn't the bills."

"Don't talk o' your going, sister," said Mrs. Tulliver; "I should have nobody to stand between me and sister Glegg if you was gone. And there's nobody but you can get her to make it up wi' Mr. Tulliver, for sister Deane's never o' my side, and if she was, it's not to be looked for as she can speak like them as have got an independent fortin."

"Well, your husband *is* awk'ard, you know, Bessy," said Mrs. Pullet, good-naturedly, ready to use her deep depression on her sister's account as well as her own. "He's never behaved quite so pretty to our family as he should do, and the children take after him—the boy's very mischievous, and runs away from his aunts and uncles, and the gell's rude and brown. It's your bad luck, and I'm sorry for you, Bessy; for you was allays my favourite sister, and we allays liked the same patterns."

"I know Tulliver's hasty, and says odd things," said Mrs. Tulliver wiping away one small tear from the corner of her eye, "but I'm sure he's never been the man, since he married me, to object to my making the friends o' my side o' the family welcome to the house."

"Well, Bessy" said Mrs. Pullet mournfully, "*I* don't want to help you on to ruin. I won't be behind hand i' doing you a good turn, if it is to be done. And I don't like it said among acquaintance as we've got quarrels in the family. I shall tell Jane that; and I don't mind driving to Jane's to-morrow, if Pullet doesn't mind. What do you say, Mr. Pullet?"

"I've no objections," said Mr. Pullet, who was perfectly contented with any course the quarrel might take, so that Mr. Tulliver did not apply to *him* for money. Mr. Pullet was nervous about his investment, and did not see how a man could have any security for his money unless he turned it into land.

After a little further discussion as to whether it would not be better for Mrs. Tulliver to accompany them on the visit to

sister Glegg, Mrs. Pullet, observing that it was tea-time, turned to reach from a drawer a delicate damask napkin, which she pinned before her in the fashion of an apron. The door did, in fact, soon open, but instead of the tea-tray, Sally introduced an object so startling that both Mrs. Pullet and Mrs. Tulliver gave a scream, causing uncle Pullet to swallow his lozenge—for the fifth time in his life, as he afterwards noted.

Chapter 10

MAGGIE BEHAVES WORSE THAN SHE EXPECTED

The startling object which thus made an epoch for uncle Pullet, was no other than little Lucy, with one side of her person, from her small foot to her bonnet crown, wet and discoloured with mud, holding out two tiny blackened hands, and making a very piteous face. To account for this unprecedented apparition in aunt Pullet's parlour we must return to the moment when the three children went to play out of doors, and the small demons who had taken possession of Maggie's soul at an early period of the day had returned in all the greater force after a temporary absence. All the disagreeable recollections of the morning were thick upon her, when Tom, whose displeasure towards her had been considerably refreshed by her foolish trick of causing him to upset his cowslip wine, said, "Here, Lucy, you come along with me," and walked off to the area where the toads were, as if there were no Maggie in existence. Seeing this, Maggie lingered at a distance, looking like a small Medusa with her snakes cropped.

As long as Tom seemed to prefer Lucy to her, Lucy made part of his unkindness. Maggie would have thought a little while ago that she could never be cross with pretty little Lucy, any more than she could be cruel to a little white mouse ; but then, Tom had always been quite indifferent to Lucy before, and it had been left to Maggie to pet and make much of her. As it was, she was actually beginning to think that she should like to make Lucy cry, by slapping or pinching her, especially as it might vex Tom, whom it was of no use to slap, even if she dared, because he didn't mind it. And if Lucy hadn't been

there, Maggie was sure he would have got friends with her sooner.

"Here, Lucy !" he said in a loud whisper, "come here ! take care ! keep on the grass—don't step where the cows have been !" he added, pointing to a peninsula of dry grass with trodden mud on each side of it ; for Tom's contemptuous conception of a girl included the attribute of being unfit to walk in dirty places.

Lucy came carefully as she was bidden, and bent down to look at what seemed a golden arrow-head darting through the water. It was a water snake, Tom told her, and Lucy at last could see the serpentine wave of its body, very much wondering that a snake could swim. Maggie had drawn nearer and nearer—she *must* see it too, though it was bitter to her like everything else, since Tom did not care about her seeing it. At last she was close by Lucy, and Tom, who had been aware of her approach, but would not notice it till he was obliged, turned round and said—

"Now, get away, Maggie. There's no room for you on the grass here. Nobody asked *you* to come."

There were passions at war in Maggie at that moment to have made a tragedy, if tragedies were made by passion only, but the essential force which was present in the passion was wanting to the action ; the utmost Maggie could do with a fierce thrust of her small brown arm, was to push poor little pink-and-white Lucy into the cow-trodden mud.

Then Tom could not restrain himself, and gave Maggie two smart slaps on the arm as he ran to pick up Lucy, who lay crying helplessly. Maggie retreated to the roots of a tree a few yards off, and looked impenitently. Usually her repentance came quickly after one rash deed, but now Tom and Lucy had made her so miserable, she was glad to spoil their happiness—glad to make everybody uncomfortable. Why should she be sorry ? Tom was very slow to forgive *her*, however sorry she might have been.

"I shall tell mother, you know, Miss Mag," said Tom, loudly and emphatically, as soon as Lucy was up and ready to walk away.

"Sally," said Tom, when they reached the kitchen door, and Sally looked at them in speechless amaze, with a piece of bread and butter in her mouth and a toasting fork in her hand —"Sally, tell mother it was Maggie pushed Lucy into the mud."

Sally, as you are aware, lost no time in presenting Lucy at the parlour door for to have so dirty an object introduced into the house at Garum Firs was too great a weight to be sustained by a single mind.

"Goodness gracious!" aunt Pullet exclaimed, after preluding by an inarticulate scream; "keep her at the door, Sally! Don't bring her off the oil-cloth, whatever you do."

"Why, she's tumbled into some nasty mud," said Mrs. Tulliver, going up to Lucy to examine into the amount of damage to clothes for which she felt herself responsible to her sister Deane.

"If you please, 'um, it was Miss Maggie as pushed her in." said Sally; "Master Tom's been and said so, and they must ha' been to the pond, for it's only there they could ha' got into such dirt."

"There it is, Bessy; it's what I've been telling you," said Mrs. Pullet, in a tone of prophetic sadness; "it's your children —there's no knowing what they'll come to."

"Tom, you naughty boy, where's your sister?" said Mrs. Tulliver in a distressed voice.

"I don't know," said Tom; his eagerness for justice on Maggie had diminished since he had seen clearly that it could hardly be brought about without the injustice of some blame on his own conduct.

"Why, where did you leave her?" said his mother, looking round.

"Sitting under the tree against the pond," said Tom, apparently indifferent to everything but the string and the turkey-cock.

"Then go and fetch her in this minute, you naughty boy. And how could you think o' going to the pond, and taking

your sister where there was dirt? You know she'll do mischief, if there is mischief to be done."

It was Mrs. Tulliver's way, if she blamed Tom, to refer his misdemeanour, somehow or other, to Maggie.

The idea of Maggie sitting alone by the pond roused an habitual fear in Mrs. Tulliver's mind, and she mounted the horse-block to satisfy herself by sight of that fatal child, while Tom walked—not very quickly—on his way towards her.

"They're such children for the water, mine are," she said aloud, without reflecting that there was no one to hear her; "they'll be brought in dead and drowned some day. I wish that river was far enough."

But when she not only failed to discern Maggie, but presently saw Tom returning from the pool alone, this hovering fear entered and took complete possession of her, and she hurried to meet him.

"Maggie's nowhere about the pond, mother," said Tom; "she's gone away."

You may conceive the terrified search for Maggie, and the difficulty of convincing her mother that she was not in the pond. Mrs. Pullet observed that the child might come to a worse end if she lived—there was no knowing; and Mr. Pullet, confused and overwhelmed by this revolutionary aspect of things—the tea deferred and the poultry alarmed by the unusual running to and fro—took up his spud as an instrument of search, and reached down a key to unlock the goose-pen, as a likely place for Maggie to lie concealed in.

Tom, after a while, started the idea that Maggie was gone home (without thinking necessary to state that it was what he should have done himself under the circumstances), and the suggestion was seized as a comfort by the mother.

"Sister for goodness sake, let 'em put the horse in the carriage and take me home—we shall perhaps find her on the road. Lucy can't walk in her dirty clothes," she said, looking at that innocent victim, who was wrapped up in a shawl, and sitting with naked feet on the sofa.

Aunt Pullet was quite willing to take the shortest means of restoring her premises to order and quiet, and it was not long before Mrs. Tulliver was in the chaise looking anxiously at the most distant point before her. What the father would say if Maggie was lost was a question that predominated over every other.

Chapter 11

MAGGIE TRIES TO RUN AWAY FROM HER SHADOW

Maggie's intentions, as usual, were on a larger scale than Tom had imagined. The resolution that gathered in her mind, after Tom and Lucy had walked away, was not so single as that of going home. No ! she would run away and go to the gypsies, and Tom should never see her any more.

Maggie soon got out of breath with running, but by the time Tom got to the pond again she was at the distance of three long fields, and was on the edge of the lane leading to the high-road.

She was used to wandering about the fields by herself, and was less timid there than on the high-road. Sometimes she had to climb over high gates, but that was a small evil ; she was getting out of reach very fast, and she should probably soon come within sight of Dunlow Common, or at least some other common, for she had heard her father say that you couldn't go very far without coming to a common. She hoped so, for she was getting rather tired and hungry, and until she reached the gypsies there was no definite prospect of bread-and-butter.

At last, however, the green fields came to an end, and Maggie found herself looking through the bars of a gate into a lane with a wide margin of grass on each side of it. She had never seen such a wide lane before, and, without her knowing why, it gave her the impression that the common could not be far off ; perhaps it was because she saw a donkey with a log to his foot feeding on the grassy margin, for she had seen a donkey with that pitiable encumbrance on Dunlow Common when she had been across it in her father's gig. She crept through the

bars of the gate and walked on with new spirit, though not without haunting images of Apollyon, and a highwayman with a pistol, and a blinking dwarf in yellow, with a mouth from ear to ear, and other miscellaneous dangers. For poor little Maggie had at once the timidity of an active imagination and the daring that comes from overmastering impulse. She had rushed into the adventure of seeking her unknown kindred, the gypsies; and now she was in this strange lane she hardly dared look on one side of her, lest she should see the diabolical blacksmith in his leathern apron, grinning at her with arms akimbo. It was not without a leaping of the heart that she caught sight of a small pair of bare legs sticking up, feet uppermost, by the side of a hillock; they seemed something hideously preternatural—a diabolical kind of fungus; for she was too much agitated at the first glance to see the ragged clothes and the dark shaggy head attached to them. It was a boy asleep, and Maggie trotted along faster and more lightly, lest she should wake him: it did not occur to her that he was one of her friends the gypsies, who in all probability would have very genial manners. But the fact was so, far at the next bend in the lane Maggie actually saw the little semi-circular black tent with the blue smoke rising before it, which was to be her refuge from all the blighting obloquy that had pursued her in civilized life. She even saw a tall female figure by the column of smoke—doubtless the gypsy mother, who provided the tea and other groceries; it was astonishing to herself that she did not feel more delighted. But it was startling to find the gypsies in a lane, after all, and not on a common; indeed, it was rather disappointing, for a mysterious illimitable common, where there were sandpits to hide in, and one was out of everybody's reach, had always made part of Maggie's picture of gypsy life. She went on, however; and thought with some comfort that gypsies most likely knew nothing about idiots, so there was no danger of their falling into the mistake of setting her down at the first glance as an idiot. It was plain she had attracted attention; for the tall figure, who proved to be a young woman with a baby on her arm, walked slowly to meet her. Maggie looked up in the new face rather tremblingly as it approached, and was reassured by the thought that her aunt Pullet and the rest were right when they called her a gypsy, for this face, with

the bright dark eyes and the long hair, was really something like what she used to see in the glass before she cut her hair off.

"My little lady, where are you going to?" the gypsy said in a tone of coaxing deference.

It was delightful, and just what Maggie expected: the gypsies saw at once that she was a little lady, and were prepared to treat her accordingly.

"Not any further," said Maggie, feeling as if she were saying what she had rehearsed in a dream. "I'm come to stay with *you*, please."

"That's pritty; come, then. Why, what a nice little lady you are, to be sure," said the gypsy, taking her by the hand. Maggie thought her very agreeable, but wished she had not been so dirty.

There was quite a group round the fire when they reached it. An old gypsy-woman was seated on the ground nursing her knees, and occasionally poking a skewer into the round kettle that sent forth an odorous steam: two small shock-headed children were lying prone and resting on their ellows something like small sphinxes; and a placid donkey was bending his head over a tall girl. who, lying on her back, was scratching his nose and indulging him with a bite of excellent stolen hay.

At last the old woman said—

"What, my pretty lady, are you come to stay with us? Sit ye down, and tell us where you come from."

It was just like a story: Maggie liked to be called pretty lady and treated in this way; She sat down and said—

"I'm come from home because I'm unhappy, and I mean to be a gypsy. I'll live with you, if you like, and I can teach you a great many things."

"Why, she's hungry, poor little lady," said the younger woman. "Give her some o' the cold victual. You've been walking a good way, I'll be bound, my dear. Where's your home?"

"It's Dorlcote Mill, a good way off," said Maggie. "My father is Mr. Tulliver, but we mustn't let him know where I am, else he'll fetch me home again. Where does the queen of the gypsies live ?"

"What ! do you want to go to her, my little lady ?" said the younger woman. The tall girl meanwhile was constantly staring at Maggie and grinning. Her manners were certainly not agreeable.

"No," said Maggie, "I'm only thinking that if she isn't a very good queen you might be glad when she died, and you could choose another. If I was a queen I'd be a very good queen, and kind to everybody."

Here's a bit o' nice victual, then," said the old woman; handing to Maggie a lump of dry bread, which she had taken from a bag of scraps, and a piece of cold bacon.

"Thank you," said Maggie, looking at the food without taking it ; but will you give me some bread-and-butter and tea instead ? I don't like bacon."

"We've got no tea nor butter." said the old woman with something like a scowl, as if she were getting tired of coaxing.

"O, a little bread and treacle would do," said Maggie.

"We ha'n't got no treacle," said the old woman crossly, whereupon there followed a sharp dialogue between the two women in their unknown tongue, and one of the small sphinxes snatched at the bread-and-bacon and began to eat it. At this moment the tall girl who had gone a few yards off, came back and said something which produced a strong effect. The old woman, seeming to forget Maggie's hunger, poked the skewer into the pot with new vigour, and the younger crept under the tent and reached out some platters and spoons. Maggie trembled a little, and was afraid the tears would come into her eyes. Meanwhile the tall girl gave a shrill cry, and presently came running up the boy, whom Maggie had passed as he was sleeping—a rough urchin about the age of Tom. He stared at Maggie, and there ensued much incomprehensible chattering. She felt very lonely, and was quite sure she should begin to cry before long : the gypsies didn't seem to mind her at all, and she felt quite weak among them. But the springing tears

were checked by a new terror, when two men came up, whose approach had been the cause of the sudden excitement. The elder of the two carried a bag, which he flung down, addressing the women in a loud and scolding tone, which they answered by a shower of treble sauciness; while a black cur ran barking up to Maggie, and threw her into a tremor that only found a new cause in the curses with which the younger man called the dog off, and gave him a rap with a great stick he held in his hand.

Both the men now seemed to be inquiring about Maggie, for they looked at her, and the tone of the conversation became of that pacific kind which implies curiosity on one side and the power of satisfying it on the other. At last the younger woman said in her previous deferential coaxing tone—

"This nice little lady's come to live with us: aren't you glad?"

"Ay, very glad," said the young man.

"We've got nothing nice for a lady to eat," said the old woman in her coaxing tone. "And she's so hungry, sweet little lady."

"Here, my dear, try if you can eat a bit o' this," said the younger woman, handing some of the stew on a brown dish with an iron spoon to Maggie, who, remembering that the old woman had seemed angry with her for not liking the bread-and-bacon, dared not refuse the stew, though fear had chased away her appetite.

Her ideas about the gypsies had undergone a rapid modification in the last five minutes. From having considered them very respectful companions, amenable to instruction, she had begun to think that they meant perhaps to kill her as soon as it was dark, and cut up her body for gradual cooking.

"What! you don't like the smell of it, my dear," said the young woman, observing that Maggie did not even take a spoonful of the stew. "Try a bit—come."

"No, thank you," said Maggie summoning all her force for a desperate effort, and trying to smile in a friendly way. "I haven't time, I think—it seems getting darker. I think I must

go home now, and come again another day, and then I can bring you a basket with some jam-tarts and things."

Maggie rose from her seat as she threw out this illusory prospect, devoutly hoping that Apollyon was gullible; but her hope sank when the old gypsy woman said, "Stop a bit, stop a bit, little lady—we'll take you home, all safe, when we've done supper: you shall ride home, like a lady."

Maggie sat down again, with little faith in this promise, though she presently saw the tall girl putting a bridle on the donkey, and throwing a couple of bags on his back.

"Now, then, little missis," said the younger man, rising and leading the donkey forward, "tell us where you live—what's the name o' the place?"

"Dorlcote Mill is my home," said Maggie eagerly. "My father is Mr. Tulliver—he lives there."

"What! a big mill a little way this side o' St. Ogg's?"

"Yes," said Maggie. "Is it far off? I think I should like to walk there if you please."

"No, no, it'll be getting dark, we must make haste. And the donkey 'll carry you as nice as can be—you'll see."

He lifted Maggie as he spoke, and set her on the donkey.

It now appeared that the man also was to be seated on the donkey, holding Maggie before him, and she was as incapable of remonstrating against this arrangement as the donkey himself, though no nightmare had ever seemed to her more horrible. When the woman had patted her on the back and said "good-bye," the donkey, at a strong hint from the man's stick, set off at a rapid walk along the lane tawards the point Maggie had come from an hour ago, while the tall girl and the rough urchin, also furnished with sticks, obligingly escorted them for the first hundred yards, with much screaming and thwacking.

At last—O, sight of joy!—this lane, the longest in the world, was coming to an end, was opening on a broad high-road, where there was actually a coach passing! And there was a finger-post at the corner: she had surely seen that

finger-post before—"To St. Ogg's, 2 miles." The gypsy really meant to take her home, then : he was probably a good man after all, and might have been rather hurt at the thought that she didn't like coming with him alone. This idea became stronger as she felt more and more certain that she knew the road quite well, and she was considering how she might open a conversation with the injured gypsy, and not only gratify his feelings but efface the impression of her cowardice, when, as they reached a cross-road, Maggie caught sight of someone coming on a white-faced horse.

"O, stop, stop !" she cried out. "There's my father ! O father, father !"

The sudden joy was almost painful, and before her father reached her she was sobbing. Great was Mr. Tulliver's wonder, for he had made a round from Basset, and had not yet been home.

"Why, what's the meaning o' this ?" he said, checking his horse, while Maggie slipped from the donkey and ran to her father's stirrup.

"The little miss lost herself, I reckon," said the gypsy. "She'd come to our tent at the far end o' Dunlow Lane, and I was bringing her where she said her home was. It's a good way to come arter being on the tramp all day."

"O, yes, father, he's been very good to bring me home," said Maggie. "A very kind, good man !"

"Here, then, my man," said Mr. Tulliver, taking out five shillings. "It's the best day's work *you* ever did. I couldn't afford to lose the little wench ; here, lift her up before me."

"Why, Maggie, how's this, how's this ?" he said as they rode along, while she laid her head against her father and sobbed. "How came you to be rambling about and lose yourself ?"

"O, father," sobbed Maggie, "I ran away because I was so unhappy—Tom was so angry with me. I couldn't bear it."

"Pooh, pooh," said Mr. Tulliver soothingly, "you mustn't

think of running away from father. What 'ud father do without his little wench ?"

"O no, I never will again, father—never."

Chapter 12

MR. AND MRS. GLEGG AT HOME

Mr. Glegg, having retired from active business as a wool-stapler, for the purpose of enjoying himself through the rest of his life, now spent much of his time in his garden, looking after flowers and vegetables.

Mr. Glegg had a double source of mental occupation, which gave every promise of being inexhaustible. On the one hand, he surprised himself by his discoveries in natural history, finding that his piece of garden-ground contained wonderful caterpillars, slugs, and insects, which, so far as he had heard, had never before attracted human observation.

And his second subject of meditation was the "contrairiness" of the female mind, as typically exhibited in Mrs. Glegg. That a creature made—in a genealogical sense—out of a man's rib, and in this particular case maintained in the highest respectability without any trouble of her own, should be normally in a state of contradiction to the blandest propositions, and even to the most accommodating concessions, was a mystery in the scheme of things to which he had often in vain sought a clue in the early chapters of Genesis. Mr. Glegg had chosen the eldest Miss Dodson as a handsome embodiment of female prudence and thrift, and being himself of a money-getting, money keeping turn, had calculated on much conjugal harmony. But in that curious compound, the feminine character, it may easily happen that the flavour is unpleasant in spite of excellent ingredients ; and a fine systematic stinginess may be accompanied with a seasoning that quite spoils its relish. Now good Mr. Glegg himself was stingy in the most amiable manner : his neighbours called him "near", which always means that the person in question is a lovable skin-flint.

There was no humbug or hypocrisy about Mr. Glegg : his eyes would have watered with true feeling over the sale of a

widow's furniture, which a five-pound note from his sidepocket would have prevented; but a donation of five pounds to a person "in a small way of life" would have seemed to him a mad kind of lavishness rather than "charity", which had always presented itself to him as a contribution of small aids, not a neutralising of misfortune. And Mr. Glegg was just as fond of saving other people's money as his own: he would have ridden as far round to avoid a turnpike when his expenses were to be paid for him as when they were to come out of his own pocket, and was quite zealous in trying to induce indifferent acquaintances to adopt a cheap substitute for blacking. This inalienable habit of saving, as an end in itself, belonged to the industrious men of business of a former generation, who made their fortunes slowly, almost as the tracking of the fox belongs to the harrier—it constituted them a "race", which is nearly lost in these days of rapid money-getting, when lavishness comes close on the back of want.

Mr. Glegg's unmistakable kind-heartedness was shown in this, that it pained him more to see his wife at variance with others—even with Dolly, the servant—than to be in a state of cavil with her himself; and the quarrel between her and Mr. Tulliver vexed him so much that it quite nullified the pleasure he would otherwise have had in the state of his early cabbages, as he walked in his garden before breakfast the next morning. Still he went in to breakfast with some slight hope that, now Mrs. Glegg had "slept upon it", her anger might be subdued enough to give way to her usually strong sense of family decorum.

"Well, Mr. Glegg!" said Mrs. Glegg, "it's a poor return I get for making you the wife I've made you all these years. If this is the way I'm to be treated. I'd better ha' known it before my poor father died, and then, when I'd wanted a home, I should ha' gone elsewhere—as the choice was offered me."

Mr. Glegg paused from his porridge and looked up—not with any new amazement, but simply with that quiet habitual wonder with which we regard constant mysteries.

"Why, Mrs. G. what have I done now?"

"Done now, Mr. Glegg? *done now?*......I'm sorry for you."

Not seeing his way to any pertinent answer, Mr. Glegg reverted to his porridge.

'There's husbands in the world," continued Mrs. Glegg after a pause, "as 'ud have known how to do something different to siding with everybody else against their own wives. Perhaps I'm wrong, and you can teach me better—but I've allays heard as it's the husband's place to stand by the wife, instead o' rejoicing and triumphing when folks insult her."

"Now, what call have you to say that?" said Mr. Glegg, rather warmly, for though a kind man he was not as meek as Moses, "When did I rejoice or triumph over you?"

"There's ways o' doing things worse than speaking out plain, Mr. Glegg. I'd sooner you'd tell me to my face as you make light of me, than try to make out as everybody's in the right but me, and come to your breakfast in the morning, as I've hardly slept an hour this night, and sulk at me as i I was the dirt under your feet."

"Sulk at you?" said Mr. Glegg in a tone of angry facetiousness. "You're like a tipsy man as thinks everybody's had too much but himself."

"Don't lower yourself with using, coarse language to *me*, Mr. Glegg! It makes you look very small, though you can't see yourself," said Mrs. Glegg in a tone of energetic compassion. "A man in your place should set an example, and talk more sensible."

"Yes; but will you listen to sense?" retorted Mr. Glegg sharply. "The best sense I can talk to you is what I said last night—as you're i' the wrong to think o' calling in your money when it's safe enough if you'd let it alone, all because of a bit of a tiff, and I was in hopes you'd ha' altered your mind this morning. But if you'd like to call it in, don't do it in a hurry now, and breed more enmity in the family—but wait till there's a pretty mortgage to be had without any trouble. You'd have to set the lawyer to work now to find an investment, and make no end o' expense."

Mrs. Glegg felt there was really something in this, but she tossed her head and emitted a guttural interjection to indicate

that her silence was only an armistice, not a peace. And, in fact, hostilities soon broke out again.

"I'll thank you for my cup o' tea, now, Mrs. G.," said Mr. Glegg, seeing that she did not proceed to give it to him as usual when he had finished his porridge. She lifted the teapot with a slight toss of the head, and said—

"I'm glad to hear you'll *thank* me, Mr. Glegg. It's little thanks *I* get for what I do for folks i' this world. Though there's never a woman o' *your* side i' the family, Mr. Glegg, as is fit to stand up with me, and I'd say it if I was on my dying bed. Not but what I've allays conducted myself civil to your kin, and there isn't one of 'em can say the contrary though my equils they aren't, and nobody shall make me say it."

"You'd better leave finding fault wi' my kin till you've left off quarrelling with your own, Mrs. G.," said Mr. Glegg, with angry sarcasm. "I'll trouble you for the milk-jug."

"That's as false a word as ever you spoke. Mr. Glegg," said the lady, pouring out the milk with unusual profuseness, as much as to say, if he wanted milk, he should have it with a vengeance. "And you know it's false. I'm not the woman to quarrel with my own kin: *you* may, for I've known you do it."

"Why, what did you call it yesterday them, leaving your sister's house in a tantrum?"

"I'd no quarrel wi' my sister, Mr. Glegg, and it's false to say it. Mr. Tulliver's none o' my blood, and it was him quarrelled with me, and drove me out o' the house. But perhaps you'd have had me stay and be swore at, Mr. Glegg perhaps you was vexed not to hear more abuse and foul language poured out upo' your own wife. But, let me tell you, it's *your* disgrace."

"Did ever anybody hear the like i' this parish?" said Mr. Glegg, getting, hot. "A woman with everything provided for her, and allowed to keep her own money the same as if it was settled on her, and with a gig new stuffed and lined at no end o' expense, and provided for when I die beyond anything she could expect......to go on i' this way, biting and

snapping like a mad dog! It's beyond everything as God A' mighty should ha' made woman so." (These last words were uttered in a tone of sorrowful agitation. Mr. Glegg pushed his tea from him, and tapped the table with both his hands.)

"Well, Mr. Glegg! if those are your feelings, it's best they should be known," said Mrs. Glegg, taking off her napkin and folding it in an excited manner. "But if you talk o' my being provided for beyond what I could expect, I beg leave to tell you as I'd a right to expect a many things as I don't find. And as to my being like a mad dog, it's well if you're not cried shame on by the country for your treatment of me, for it's what I can't bear, and I won't bear—"

Here Mrs. Glegg's voice intimated that she was going to cry, and, breaking off from speech, she rang the bell violently.

"Sally," she said, rising from her chair, and speaking in rather a choked voice, "light a fire upstairs, and put the blinds down. Mr. Glegg, you'll please to order what you like for dinner. I shall have gruel."

Mrs. Glegg walked across the room to the small bookcase, and took down Baxter's *Saints' Everlasting Rest*, which she carried with her upstairs. It was the book she was accustomed to lay open before her on special occasions, on wet Sunday mornings, or when she heard of a death in the family, or when, as in this case, her quarrel with Mr. Glegg had been set an octave higher than usual.

But Mrs. Glegg carried something else upstairs with her, which together with the *Saints' Rest* and the gruel, may have had some influence in gradually calming her feelings, and making it possible for her to endure existence on the ground-floor shortly before tea-time. This was, partly, Mr. Glegg's suggestion that she would do well to let her five hundred lie still until a good investment turned up; and further, his parenthetic hint at his handsome provision for her in case of his death.

So that when good Mr. Glegg, restored to good-humour by much hoeing, and moved by the sight of his wife's empty chair, with her knitting rolled up in the corner, went upstairs to her, and observed that the bell had been tolling for poor Mr. Morton,

Mrs. Glegg answered magnanimously, quite as if she had been an uninjured woman, "Ah ! then, there'll be a good business for somebody to take to."

Baxter had been open at least eight hours by this time, for it was nearly five o'clock ; and if people are to quarrel often it follows as a corollary that their quarrels cannot be protracted beyond certain limits.

Mr. and Mrs. Glegg talked quite amicably about the Tullivers that evening. Mr. Glegg went the length of admitting that Tulliver was a sad man for getting into hot water, and was like enough to run through his property ; and Mrs. Glegg meeting this acknowledgement half-way, declared that it was beneath her to take notice of such a man's conduct, and that for her sister's sake, she would let him keep the five hundred a while longer, for when she put it out on a mortgage she should only get four per cent.

Chapter 13

MR. TULLIVER FURTHER ENTANGLES THE SKEIN OF LIFE

Owing to the new adjustment of Mrs. Glegg's thoughts, Mrs. Pullet found her task of mediation the next day surprisingly easy. Mrs. Glegg, indeed, checked her rather sharply for thinking it would be necessary to tell her elder sister what was the right mode of behaviour in family matters. Mrs. Pullet's argument that it would look ill in the neighbourhood if people should have it in their power to say that there was a quarrel in the family, was particularly offensive. If the family name never suffered except through Mrs. Glegg, Mrs. Pullet might lay her head on her pillow in perfect confidence.

"It's not to be expected, I suppose," observed Mrs. Glegg, by way of winding up the subject, "as I shall go to the mill again before Bessy comes to see me, or as I shall go and fall down o' my knees to Mr. Tulliver and ask his pardon for showing him favours ; but I shall bear no malice, and when Mr. Tulliver speaks civil to me, I'll speak civil to him. Nobody has any call to tell me what's becoming."

Mrs. Glegg, being in this state of satisfaction in her own

lofty magnanimity, I leave you to judge what effect was produced on her by the reception of a short letter from Mr. Tulliver that very evening, after Mrs. Pullet's departure, informing her that she needn't trouble her mind about her five hundred pounds, for it should be paid back to her in the course of the next month at the farthest, together with the interest due thereon until the time of payment. And furthermore that Mr. Tulliver had no wish to behave uncivilly to Mrs. Glegg, and she was welcome to his house whenever she liked to come, but he desired no favours from her, either for himself or his children.

Mr. Glegg did not alter her will in consequence of this letter, did not cut off the Tulliver children from their sixth and seventh share in her thousand pounds; for she had her principles. No one must be able to say of her when she was dead that she had not divided her money with perfect fairness among her own kin: in the matter of wills, personal qualities were subordinate to the great fundamental fact of blood.

Mr. Tulliver's prompt precedure entailed on him further promptitude in finding the convenient person who was desirous of lending five hundred ponds on bond. "It must be no client of Wakem's," he said to himself; and yet at the end of a fortnight it turned out to the contrary; not because Mr. Tulliver's will was feeble, but because external fact was stronger. Wakem's client was the only convenient person to be found. Mr. Tulliver had a destiny as well as Oedipus, and in this case he might plead, like Oedipus, that his deed was inflicted on him rather than committed by him.

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BOOK SECOND

SCHOOL TIME

Chapter I

TOM'S "FIRST HALF"

Tom Tulliver's sufferings during the first quarter he was at King's Lorton, under the distinguished care of the Rev. Walter Stelling, were rather severe.

Not that Mr. Stelling was a harsh-tempered or unkind man—quite the contrary: he was jocose with Tom at table, and corrected his provincialisms and his deportment in the most playful manner; but poor Tom was only the more cowed and confused by this double novelty, for he had never been used to jokes at all like Mr. Stelling's; and for the first time in his life he had a painful sense that he was all wrong somehow.

Mr. Stelling very soon set down poor Tom as a thoroughly stupid lad; for though by hard labour he could get particular declensions into his brain, anything so abstract as the relation between cases and terminations could by no means get such a lodgment there as to enable him to recognise a chance genitive or dative. This struck Mr. Stelling as something more than natural stupidity: he suspected obstinacy, or, at any rate, indifference; and lectured Tom severely on his want of thorough application. "You feel no interest in what you're doing, sir," Mr. Stelling would say, and the reproach was painfully true. Tom had never found any difficulty in discerning a pointer from a setter, when once he had been told the distinction, and his perceptive powers were not at all deficient. I fancy they were quite as strong as those of the Rev. Mr. Stelling; for Tom could predict with accuracy what number of horses were cantering behind him, he could throw a stone right into the centre of a

given ripple, he could guess to a fraction how many lengths of his stick it would take to reach across the playground, and could draw almost perfect squares on his slate without any measurement. But Mr. Stelling took no note of these things: he only observed that Tom's faculties failed him before the abstractions hideously symbolized to him in the pages of the Eton Grammar, and that he was in a state bordering on idiocy with regard to the demonstration that two given triangles must be equal—though he could discern with great promptitude and certainty the fact that they *were* equal. Whence Mr. Stelling concluded that Tom's brain, being peculiarly impervious to etymology and demonstrations, was peculiarly in need of being ploughed and harrowed by these patent implements: it was his favourite metaphor, that the classics and geometry constituted that culture of the mind which prepared it for the reception of any subsequent crop.

Tom Tulliver, being abundant in no form of speech, did not use any metaphor to declare his views as to the nature of Latin: he never called it an instrument of torture; and it was not until he had got on some way in the next half-year and in the Delectus, that he was advanced enough to call it a "bore" and "beastly stuff". At present, in relation to this demand that he should learn Latin declensions and conjugations, Tom was in a state of as blank unimaginativeness concerning the cause and tendency of his sufferings as if he had been an innocent shrewmouse imprisoned in the split trunk of an ash tree in order to cure lameness in cattle.

Mrs. Stelling had lately had her second baby, and as nothing could be more salutary for a boy than to feel himself useful, Mrs. Stelling considered she was doing Tom a service by setting him to watch the little cherub Laura while the nurse was occupied with the sickly baby. It was quite a pretty employment for Tom to take little Laura out in the sunniest hour of the autumn day—it would help to make him feel that Lorton Parsonage was a home for him, and that he was one of the family. The little cherub Laura, not being an accomplished walker at present, had a ribbon fastened round her waist, by which Tom held her as if she had been a little dog during the minutes in which she chose to walk; but as these were rare, he

was for the most part carrying this fine child round and round the garden, within sight of Mrs. Stelling's window—according to orders.

If Tom had had a worse disposition, he would certainly have hated the little cherub Laura, but he was too kind-hearted a lad for that—there was too much in him of the fibre that turns to true manliness, and to protecting pity for the weak. I am afraid he hated Mrs. Stelling, and contracted a lasting dislike to pale blond ringlets and broad plaits, as directly associated with haughtiness of manner and a frequent reference to other people's "duty". But he couldn't help playing with little Laura, and liking to amuse her.

And before this dreary half-year was ended, Maggie actually came. Mrs. Stelling had given a general invitation for the little girl to come and stay with her brother; so when Mr. Tulliver drove over to King's Lorton late in October, Maggie came too, with the sense that she was taking a great journey, and beginning to see the world. It was Mr. Tulliver's first visit to see Tom, for the lad must learn not to think too much about home.

"Well, my lad," he said to Tom. Mr. Stelling had left the room to announce the arrival to his wife, and Maggie had begun to kiss Tom freely, "you look rarely ! School agrees with you."

Tom wished he had looked rather ill.

"I don't think I *am* well, father," said Tom ; "I wish you'd ask Mr. Stelling not to let me do Euclid—it brings on the toothache, I think."

(The toothache was the only malady to which Tom had ever been subject).

"Euclid, my lad—why, what's that ?" said Mr. Tulliver.

"O, I don't know : it's definition, and axioms, and triangles, and things. It's a book I've got to learn in—there's no sense in it."

"Go, go !" said Mr. Tulliver, reprovingly, "you mustn't say so. You must learn what your master tells you. He knows what it's right for you to learn."

"*I'll* help you now, Tom," said Maggie, with a little air of patronising consolation. "I'm come to stay ever so long, if Mrs. Stelling asks me. I've brought my box and pinafores, haven't I, father ?"

"*You* help me, you silly little thing !" said Tom, in such high spirits at this announcement that he quite enjoyed the idea of confounding Maggie by showing her a page of Euclid. "I should like to see you doing one of *my* lessons ! Why, I learn Latin too ! Girls never learn such things. They're too silly."

"I know what Latin is very well," said Maggie, confidently. "Latin's a language. There are Latin words in the Dictionary. There's bonus, a gift."

"Now, you're just wrong there, Miss Maggie !" said Tom, secretly astonished. "You think you're very wise ! But 'bonus' means 'good', as it happens—bonus, bona, bonum."

"Well, that's no reason why it shouldn't mean 'gift'," said Maggie, stoutly. "It may mean several things—almost every word does. There's 'lawn', it means the grass-plot, as well as the stuff pocket-handkerchiefs are made of."

"Well done, little 'un," said Mr. Tulliver, laughing, while Tom felt rather disgusted with Maggie's knowingness though beyond measure cheerful at the thought that she was going to stay with him. Her conceit would soon be overawed by the actual inspection of his books.

Mrs. Stelling, in her pressing invitation, did not mention a longer time than a week for Maggie's stay ; but Mr. Stelling, who took her between his knees, and asked her where she stole her dark eyes from insisted that she must stay a fort-night. Maggie thought Mr. Stelling was a charming man, and Mr. Tulliver was quite proud to leave his little wench where she would have an opportunity of showing her cleverness to appreciating strangers. So it was agreed that she should not be fetched home till the end of the fortnight.

Nevertheless it was a very happy fortnight to Maggie, this visit to Tom. She was allowed to be in the study while he had his lessons, and in her various readings get very deep into the examples in the Latin Grammar. The astronomer who hated women generally, caused her so much puzzling speculation that

she one day asked Mr. Stelling if all astronomers hated women, or whether it was only this particular astronomer. But, forestalling his answer, she said—

"I suppose it's all astronomers: because, you know, they live up in high towers, and if the women came there, they might talk and hinder them from looking at the stars."

Mr. Stelling liked her prattle immensely, and they were on the best terms. She told Tom she should like to go to school to Mr. Stelling, as he did, and learn just the same things. She knew she could do Euclid, for she had looked into it again, and she saw what A B C meant: they were the names of the lines.

"I'm sure you couldn't do it, now," said Tom; "and I'll just ask Mr. Stelling if you could."

"I don't mind," said the little conceited minx. "I'll ask him myself.

"Mr. Stelling," she said, that same evening when they were in the drawing-room, "couldn't I do Euclid, and all Tom's lessons, if you were to teach me instead of him?"

"No; you couldn't," said Tom, indignantly. "Girls can't do Euclid: can they, sir?"

"They can pick up a little of everything, I daresay," said Mr. Stelling. "They've a great deal of superficial cleverness; but they couldn't go far into anything. They're quick and shallow."

Tom, delighted with this verdict, telegraphed his triumph by wagging his head at Maggie behind Mr. Stelling's chair. As for Maggie, she had hardly ever been so mortified. She had been so proud to be called "quick" all her little life, and now it appeared that this quickness was the brand of inferiority. It would have been better to be slow, like Tom.

"Ha, ha! Miss Maggie!" said Tom, when they were alone, "you see it's not such a fine thing to be quick. You'll never go far into anything, you know."

And Maggie was so oppressed by this dreadful destiny that she had no spirit for a retort.

But when this small apparatus of shallow quickness was fetched away in the gig by Luke, and the study was once more quite lonely for Tom, he missed her grievously. He had really been brighter, and had got through his lessons better since she had been there ; and she had asked Mr. Stelling so many questions about the Roman Empire, and whether there really ever was a man who said, in Latin, "I would not buy it for a farthing or a rotten nut," or whether that had only been turned into Latin, that Tom had actually come to a dim understanding of the fact that there had once been people upon the earth who were so fortunate as to know Latin without learning it through the medium of Eton Grammar. This luminous idea was a great addition to his historical acquirements during this half-year, which were otherwise confined to an epitomized history of the Jews.

But the dreary half-year *did* come to an end. How glad Tom was to see the last yellow leaves fluttering before the cold wind ! The dark afternoons, and the first December snow, seemed to him far livelier than the August sunshine ; and that he might make himself the surer about the flight of the days that were carrying him homeward, he stuck twenty-one sticks deep in a corner of the garden, when he was three weeks from the holidays, and pulled one up every day with a great wrench, throwing it to a distance with a vigour of will which would have carried it to limbo, if it had been in the nature of sticks to travel so far.

Chapter 2

THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS

Fine old Christmas, with the snowy hair and ruddy face, had done his duty that year in the noblest fashion, and had set off his rich gifts of warmth and colour with all the heightening contrast of frost and snow.

Christmas was cheery, but not so Mr. Tulliver. He was irate and defiant, and Tom, though he espoused his father's quarrels and shared his father's sense of injury, was not without some of the feeling that oppressed Maggie when Mr. Tulliver got louder and more angry in narration and assertion

with the increased leisure of dessert. The attention that Tom might have concentrated on his nuts and wine was distracted by a sense that there were rascally enemies in the world, and that the business of grown-up life could hardly be conducted without a good deal of quarrelling. Now Tom was not fond of quarrelling unless it could soon be put an end to by a fair stand-up fight with an adversary whom he had every chance of thrashing; and his father's irritable talk made him uncomfortable, though he never accounted to himself for the feeling, or conceived the notion that his father was faulty in this respect.

The particular embodiment of the evil principle now exciting Mr. Tulliver s determined resistance was Mr. Pivart, who, having lands higher up the Ripple, was taking measures for their irrigation, which either were, or would be, or were bound to be (on the principle that water was water), an infringement on Mr. Tulliver's legitimate share of water-power. Dix, who had a mill on the stream, was a feeble auxiliary of Old Harry compared with Pivart. Dix had been brought to his senses by arbitration, and Wakem's advice had not carried *him* far: no: Dix, Mr. Tulliver considered, had been as good as nowhere in point of law; and in the intensity of his indignation against Pivart, his contempt for a baffled adversary like Dix began to wear the air of a friendly attachment. He had no male audience to-day except Mr. Moss, who knew nothing, as he said, of the "natur' o' mills", and could only assent to Mr. Tulliver's arguments on the *a priori* ground of family relationship and monetary obligation; but Mr. Tulliver did not talk with the futile intention of convincing his audience; he talked to relieve himself, while good Mr. Moss made strong efforts to keep his eyes wide open, in spite of the sleepiness which an unusually good dinner produced in this hard-worked frame. Mrs. Moss, more alive to the subject, and interested in everything that affected her brother, listened and put in a word as often as maternal pre-occupations allowed.

"Why, Pivart's a new name hereabout, brother' isn't it?" she said: "he didn't own the land in father's time, nor yours either, before I was married."

"New name? Yes—I should think it is a new name," said

Mr. Tulliver, with angry emphasis. "Dorlcote Mill's been in our family a hundred year and better, and nobody ever heard of a Pivart meddling with the river, till this fellow came and bought Bincome's farm out of hand, before anybody else could so much as say 'snap'. But I'll *Pivart* him!" added Mr. Tulliver, lifting his glass with a sense that he had defined his resolution in an unmistakable manner.

"You won't be forced to go to law with him, I hope, brother?" said Mrs. Moss, with some anxiety.

"I don't know what I shall be forced to; but I know what I shall force him to, with his dykes and erigations, if there's any law to be brought to bear o' the right side. I know well enough who's at the bottom of it; he's got Wakem to back him and egg him on. I know Wakem tells him the law can't touch him for it, but there's folks can handle the law besides Wakem. It takes a big raskil to beat him; but there's bigger to be found, as know more o' th' ins and outs o' the law else how came Wakem to lose Brumley's suit for him?"

Mr. Tulliver was a strictly honest man, and proud of being honest, but he considered that in law the ends of justice could only be achieved by employing a stronger knave to frustrate a weaker. Law was a sort of cock-fight, in which it was the business of injured honesty to get a game bird with the best pluck and the strongest spurs.

"Gore's no fool—you needn't tell me that," he observed presently, in a pugnacious tone, as if poor Gritty had been urging that lawyer's capabilities; "but you see, he isn't up to the law as Wakem is. And water's a very particular thing—you can't pick it up with a pitchfork. That's why it's been nuts to Old Harry and the lawyers. It's plain enough what's the rights and wrongs of water, if you look at it straightforward; for a river's a river, and if you've got a mill, you must have water to turn it; and it's no use telling me, Pivart's erigation and nonsense won't stop my wheel: I know what belongs to water better than that. Talk to me o' what th' engineers say! I say it's common sense, as Pivart's dykes must do me an injury. But if that's their engineering, I'll put Tom to it by-and-by and he shall see if he can't find a bit more sense in th' engineering business than what *that* comes to."

"I'm sorry to see brother so put out about this water work." said Mrs. Moss to Mrs. Tulliver.

"It's your brother's way, Mrs. Moss; I'd never anything o' that sort before I was married," said Mrs. Tulliver, with a half-implied reproach. She always spoke of her husband as "your brother" to Mrs. Moss, in any case when his line of conduct was not matter of pure admiration. Amiable Mrs. Tulliver, who was never angry in her life, had yet her mild share of that spirit without which she could hardly have been at once a Dodson and a woman. Being always on the defensive towards her own sisters, it was natural that she should be keenly conscious of her superiority, even as the weakest Donson, over a husband's sister, who, besides being poorly off, and inclined to "hang on" her brother, had the good-natured submissiveness, of a large, easy-tempered, untidy, prolific woman, with affection enough in her not only for her own husband and abundant children, but for any number of collateral relations.

"I hope and pray he won't go to law," said Mrs. Moss, "for there's never any knowing where that'll end. And the right doesn't allays win. This Mr. Pivart's a rich man, by what I can make out, and the rich mostly get things their own way."

"As to that,' said Mrs. Tulliver, stroking her dress down, "I've seen what riches are in my own family; for my sisters have got husbands as can offord to do pretty much what they like. But I think sometimes I shall be drove off my head with the talk about this law and erigation; and my sisters lay all the fault to me, for they don't know what it is to marry a man like your brother—how should they? Sister Pullet has her own way from morning till night."

"Well," said Mrs. Moss, "I don't think I should like my husband if he hadn't got any wits of his own, and I had to find head-piece for him. It's a deal easier to do what pleases one's husband, than to be puzzling what else one should do."

"If people come to talk o' doing what pleases their husbands," said Mrs. Tulliver, with a faint imitation of her sister Glegg, "I'm sure your brother might have waited a long while before he'd have found a wife that 'ud have let him have

his say in everything, as I do. It's nothing but law and erigation now, from when we first get up in the morning till we go to bed at night; and I never contradict him; I only say —"Well, Mr. Tulliver, do as you like; but whatever you do, don't go to law."

Mrs. Tulliver, as we have seen, was not without influence over her husband. No woman is; she can always incline him to do either what she wishes, or the reverse; and on the composite impulses that were threatening to hurry Mr. Tulliver into "law", Mrs. Tulliver's monotonous pleading had doubtless its share of force; it might even be comparable to that proverbial feather which has the credit or discredit of breaking the camel's back; though, on a strictly impartial view, the blame ought rather to lie with the previous weight of feathers which had already placed the back in such-imminent peril, that an otherwise innocent feather could not settle on it without mischief. Not that Mrs. Tulliver's feeble beseeching could have had this feather's weight in virtue of her single personality; but whenever she departed from entire assent to her husband, he saw in her the representative of the Dodson family; and it was a guiding principle with Mr. Tulliver, to let the Dodsons know that they were not to domineer over *him*, or—more specifically—that a male Tulliver was far more than equal to four female Dodsons, even though one of them was Mrs. Glegg.

But not even a direct argument from that typical Dodson female herself against his going to law, could have heightened his disposition towards it so much as the mere thought of Wakem, continually freshened by the sight of the too able attorney on market-days. Wakem, to his certain knowledge was (metaphorically speaking) at the bottom of Pivart's irrigation: Wakem had tried to make Dix stand out, and go to law about the dam: it was unquestionably Wakem who had caused Mr. Tulliver to lose the suit about the right of road and the bridge that made a thoroughfare of his land for every vagabond who preferred an opportunity of damaging private property to walking like an honest man along the high road: all lawyers were more or less rascals, but Wakem's rascality was of that peculiarly aggravated kind which placed itself in

opposition to that form of right embodied in Mr. Tulliver's interests and opinions. And as an extra touch of bitterness, the injured miller had recently, in borrowing the five hundred pounds, been obliged to carry a little business to Wakem's office on his own account.

"Father," said Tom one evening near the end of the holidays, "Uncle Glegg says Lawyer Wakem *is* going to send his son to Mr. Stelling. It isn't true—what they said about his going to be sent to France. You won't like me to go to school with Wakem's son, shall you ?"

"It's no matter for that, my boy," said Mr. Tulliver ; "don't you learn anything bad of him, that's all. The lad's a poor deformed creature, and takes after his mother in the face ; I think there isn't much of his father in him. It's a sign Wakem thinks high o' Mr. Stelling, as he sends his son to him, and Wakem knows meal from bran."

Chapter 3

THE NEW SCHOOLFELLOW

It was a cold, wet January day on which Tom went back to school ; a day quite in keeping with this severe phase of his destiny. If he had not carried in his pocket a parcel of sugar-candy and a small Dutch doll for little Laura, there would have been no ray of expected pleasure, to enliven the general gloom. But he liked to think how Laura would put out her lips and her tiny hands for the bits of sugar-candy ; and, to give the greater keenness to these pleasures of imagination, he took out the parcel, made a small hole in the paper, and bit of a crystal or two, which had so solacing an effect under the confined prospect and damp odours of the gig-umbrella, that he repeated the process more than once on his way.

"Well, Tulliver, we're glad to see you again," said Mr. Stelling, heartily. "Take off your wrappings and come into the study till dinner. You'll find a bright fire there, and a new companion."

Tom felt in an uncomfortable flutter as he took off his

woollen comforter and other wrappings. He had seen Philip Wakem at St. Ogg's, but had always turned his eyes away from him as quickly as possible. He would have disliked having a deformed boy for his companion, even if Philip had not been the son of a bad man. And Tom did not see how a bad man's son could be very good. His own father was a good man, and he would readily have fought anyone who said the contrary. He was in a state of mingled embarrassment and defiance as he followed Mr. Stelling to the study.

"Here is a new companion for you to shake hands with, Tulliver," said that gentleman on entering the study—"Master Philip Wakem. I shall leave you to make acquaintance by yourselves. You already know something of each other, I imagine; for you are neighbours at home."

Tom looked confused and awkward, while Philip rose and glanced at him timidly. Tom did not like to go up and put out his hand, and he was not prepared to say, "How do you do?" on so short a notice.

Mr. Stelling wisely turned away, and closed the door behind him: boys' shyness only wears off in the absence of their elders.

Phillip was at once too proud and too timid to walk towards Tom. He thought, or rather felt, that Tom had an aversion to looking at him: everyone, almost, disliked looking at him; and his deformity was more conspicuous when he walked. So they remained without shaking hands or even speaking, while Tom went to the fire and warmed himself, every now and then casting furtive glances at Philip, who seemed to be drawing absently first one object and then another on a piece of paper he had before him. He had seated himself again, and as he drew, was thinking what he could say to Tom, and trying to overcome his own repugnance to making the first advances.

Tom began to look oftener and longer at Philip's face, for he could see it without noticing the hump, and it was really not a disagreeable face—very old-looking, Tom thought. He wondered how much older Philip was than himself. An anatomist—even a mere physiognomist—would have seen that the

deformity of Philip's spine was not a congenital hump, but the result of an accident in infancy; but you do not expect from Tom any acquaintance with such distinctions: to him, Philip was simply a humpback. He had a vague notion that the deformity of Wakem's son had some relation to the lawyer's rascality, of which he had so often heard his father talk with hot emphasis; and he felt, too, a half-admitted fear of him as probably a spiteful fellow, who, not being able to fight you, had cunning ways of doing you a mischief by the sly. There was a humpbacked tailor in the neighbourhood of Mr. Jacob's academy, who was considered a very unamiable character, and was much hooted after by public-spirited boys solely on the ground of his unsatisfactory moral qualities; so that Tom was not without a basis of fact to go upon. Still, no face could be more unlike that ugly tailor's than this melancholy boy's face; the brown hair round it waved and curled at the ends like a girl's: Tom thought that truly pitiable. This Wakem was a pale, puny fellow, and it was quite clear he would not be able to play at anything worth speaking of; but he handled his pencil in an enviable manner, and was apparently making one thing after another without any trouble. What was he drawing? Tom was quite warm now, and wanted something new to be going forward. It was certainly more agreeable to have an ill-natured humpback as a companion than to stand looking out of the study window at the rain, and kicking his foot against the washboard in solitude; something would happen everyday—"a quarrel or something"; and Tom thought he should rather like to show Philip that he had better not try his spiteful tricks on *him*. He suddenly walked across the hearth, and looked over Philip's paper.

"Why, that's a doneky with panniers—and a spaniel and partridges in the corn!" he exclaimed, his tongue being completely loosed by surprise and admiration. "Oh my buttons! I wish I could draw like that. I'm to learn drawing this half—I wonder if I shall learn to make dogs and donkeys!"

"Oh, you can do them without learning," said Philip; "I never learned drawing."

"Never learned?" said Tom, in amazement. "Why, when

I make dogs and horses, and those things, the heads and the legs won't come right; though I can see how they ought to be very well. I can make houses, and all sorts of chimneys—chimneys going all down the wall, and windows in the roof, and all that. But I daresay I could do dogs and horses if I was to try more," he added, reflecting that Philip might falsely suppose that he was going to "knock under", if he were too frank about the imperfection of his accomplishments.

"Oh yes," said Philip, "it's very easy. You've only to look well at things, and draw them over and over again. What you do wrong once, you can alter the next time."

"But haven't you been taught *anything*?" said Tom, beginning to have a puzzled suspicion that Philip's crooked back might be the source of remarkable faculties. "I thought you'd been to school a long while."

"Yes," said Philip, smiling, "I've been taught Latin, and Greek, and mathematics,—and writing, and such things."

"Oh but, I say, you don't like Latin, though, do you?" said Tom, lowering his voice confidentially.

"Pretty well; I don't care much about it," said Philip.

"Ah, but perhaps you haven't got into the *Proprioe qua maribus*" said Tom, nodding his head sideways, as much as to say, "that was the test: it was easy talking till you come to *that*."

Philip felt some bitter complacency in the promising stupidity of this well-made active-looking boy; but made polite by his own extreme sensitiveness, as well as by his desire to conciliate, he checked his inclination to laugh, and said, quietly,—

"I've done with the grammar; I don't learn that any more."

"Then you won't have the same lessons as I shall?" said Tom with a sense of disappointment.

"No: but I daresay I can help you. I shall be very glad to help you if I can."

Tom did not say "Thank you", for he was quite absorbed in the thought that Wakem's son did not seem so spiteful a fellow as might have been expected.

"I say," he said presently, "do you love your father ?"

"Yes," said Philip colouring deeply ; "don't you love yours ?"

"Oh yes......I only wanted to know," said Tom, rather ashamed of himself, now he saw Philip colouring and looking uncomfortable. He found much difficulty in adjusting his attitude of mind towards the son of Lawyer Wakem, and it had occurred to him that if Philip disliked his father, that fact might go some way towards clearing up his perplexity.

Chapter 4

"THE YOUNG IDEA"

The alternations of feeling in that first dialogue between Tom and Philip continued to mark their intercourse even after many weeks of schoolboy intimacy. Tom never quite lost the feeling that Philip, being the son of a "rascal", was his natural enemy, never thoroughly overcame his repulsion to Philip's deformity : he was a boy who adhered tenaciously to impressions once received : as with all minds in which mere perception predominates over thought and emotion, the external remained to him rigidly what it was in the first instance. But then, it was impossible not to like Philip's company when he was in a good humour ; he could help one so well in one's Latin exercises, which Tom regarded as a kind of puzzle that could only be found out by a lucky chance ; and he could tell such wonderful fighting stories about Hal of the Wynd, for example, and other heroes who were especial favourites with Tom, because they laid about them with heavy strokes. He had small opinion of Saladin, whose scimitar could cut a cushion in two in an instant : who wanted to cut cushions ? That was a stupid story, and he didn't care to hear it again. But when Robert Bruce, on the black pony, rose in his stirrups, and, lifting his good battle-axe, cracked at once the helmet and the skull of the too-hasty knight at Bannockburn, then Tom felt all the exaltation of sympathy, and if he had had a coco-nut at hand, he would have cracked it at once with the poker. Philip, in his happier moods, indulged Tom to the top of his

bent, heightening the crash and bang and fury of every fight with all the artillery of epithets and similes at his command.

Tom was gradually allowed to shuffle through his lessons with less rigour, and having Philip to help him, he was able to make some show of having applied his mind in a confused and blundering way, without being cross-examined into a betrayal that his mind had been entirely neutral in the matter. He thought school much more bearable under this modification of circumstances; and he went on contentedly enough, picking up a promiscuous education chiefly from things that were not intended as education at all. What was understood to be his education was simply the practice of reading, writing, and spelling, carried on by an elaborate appliance of unintelligible ideas, and by much failure in the effort to learn by rote.

Nevertheless, there was a visible improvement in Tom under this training; perhaps because he was not a boy in the abstract, existing solely to illustrate the evils of a mistaken education, but a boy made of flesh and blood, with dispositions not entirely at the mercy of circumstances.

There was a great improvement in his bearing, for example, and some credit on this score was due to Mr. Poulter, the village schoolmaster, who, being an old Peninsular soldier, was employed to drill Tom – a source of high mutual pleasure. Mr. Poulter, who was understood by the company at the Black Swan to have once struck terror into the hearts of the French, was no longer personally formidable. He had rather a shrunken appearance, and was tremulous in the mornings, not from age, but from the extreme perversity of the King's Lorton boys, which nothing but gin could enable him to sustain with any firmness. Still, he carried himself with martial erectness, had his clothes scrupulously brushed, and his trousers tightly strapped; and on the Wednesday and Saturday afternoons, when he came to Tom, he was always inspired with gin and old memories, which gave him an exceptionally spirited air, as of a superannuated charger who hears the drum.

On afternoons, when his memory was more stimulated than usual, he remembered that the Duke of Wellington had (in strict

privacy, lest jealousies should be awakened) expressed his esteem for that fine fellow Poulter. The very surgeon who attended him in the hospital after he had received his gun-shot wound, had been profoundly impressed with the superiority of Mr. Poulter's flesh ; no other flesh would have healed in anything like the same time.

"And General Wolfe, Mr. Poulter ? wasn't he a wonderful fighter ?" said Tom, who held the notion that all the martial heroes commemorated on the public-house signs were engaged in the war with Bony.

"Not at all !" said Mr. Poulter, contemptuously. "Nothing o' the sort !...Heads up !" he added in a tone of stern command, which delighted Tom, and made him feel as if he were a regiment in his own person.

"No, no !" Mr. Poulter would continue, on coming to a pause in his discipline. "They'd better not talk to me about General Wolfe. He did nothing but die of his wound ; that's a poor haction, I consider. Any other man 'ud have died o' wounds I've had...One of my sword-cuts 'ud ha' killed a fellow like General Wolfe."

"Mr. Poulter," Tom would say, at any allusion to the sword, "I wish you'd bring your sword and do the sword-exercise !"

For a long while Mr. Poulter only shook his head in a significant manner at this request, and smiled patronisingly, as Jupiter may have done when Semele urged her too ambitious request. But one afternoon, when a sudden shower of heavy rain had detained Mr. Poulter twenty minutes longer than usual at the Black Swan, the sword was brought—just for Tom to look at.

"And this is the real sword you fought with in all the battles, Mrs. Poulter ?" said Tom, handling the hilt. "Has it ever cut a Frenchman's head off ?

"Head off ? Ah ! and would, if he'd had three heads."

"But you had a gun and bayonet besides ?" said Tom. "I should like the gun and bayonet best, because you could shoot 'em first and spear 'em after. Bang ! Ps-s-s-s !" Tom gave the

requisite pantomime to indicate the double enjoyment of pulling the trigger and thrusting the spear.

"Ah, but the sword's the thing when you come to close fighting," said Mr. Poulter, involuntarily falling in with Tom's enthusiasm, and drawing the sword so suddenly that Tom leaped back with much agility.

"Oh but, Mr. Poulter, if you're going to do the exercise," said Tom, a little conscious that he had not stood his ground as became an Englishman, "let me go and call Philip. He'll like to see you, you know."

"What! the humpbacked lad?" said Mr. Poulter, contemptuously. "What's the use of *his* looking on?"

"Oh but he knows a great deal about fighting," said Tom; "and how they used to fight with bows and arrows, and battle-axes."

"Let him come then. I'll show him something different from his bows and arrows," said Mr. Poulter, coughing, and drawing himself up, while he gave a little preliminary play to his wrist.

Tom ran in to Philip, who was enjoying his afternoon's holiday at the piano, in the drawing-room, picking out tunes for himself and singing them.

"Come, Philip," said Tom, bursting in; "don't stay roaring 'la la' there—come and see old Poulter do his sword-exercise in the carriage-house!"

Philip shuddered visibly as he paused from his music. Then turning red, he said, with violent passion,—

"Get away, you lumbering idiot! Don't come bellowing at me—you're not fit to speak to anything but a cart-horse!"

It was not the first time Philip had been made angry by him, but Tom had never before been assailed with verbal missiles that he understood so well.

"I'm fit to speak to something better than you—you poor-spirited imp!" said Tom, lighting up immediately at Philip's fire. "You know I won't hit you, because you're no better

than a girl. But I'm an honest man's son, and *your* father's a rogue—everybody says so !"

Tom flung out of the room, and slammed the door after him.

"Mr. Poulter," said Tom, "I wish you'd lend me your sword a little while to keep."

"No, no, young gentleman," said Mr. Poulter, shaking his head decidedly, "you might do yourself some mischief with it."

"No, I'm sure I wouldn't—I'm sure I'd take care and not hurt myself. I shouldn't take it out of the sheath much, but I could ground arms with it, and all that."

"No, no, it won't do, I tell you ; it won't do," said Mr. Poulter, preparing to depart. "What 'ud Mr. Stelling say to me ?"

"Oh, I say, do, Mr. Poulter ! I'd give you my five-shilling piece if you'd let me keep the sword a week. Look here !" said Tom, reaching out the attractively large round of silver. The young dog calculated the effect as if he had been a philosopher.

"Well," said Mr. Poulter, with still deeper gravity, "you must keep it out of sight you know."

"Oh yes, I'll keep it under the bed," said Tom, eagerly, "or else at the bottom of my large box."

"And let me see, now, whether you can draw it out of the sheath without hurting yourself."

That process having been gone through more than once, Mr. Poulter felt that he had acted with scrupulous conscientiousness, and said, "Well, now, Master Tulliver, if I take the crown-piece, it is to make sure as you'll do no mischief with the sword."

Chapter 5

MAGGIE'S SECOND VISIT

This last breach between the two lads was not readily mended, and for some time they spoke to each other no more

than was necessary. Their natural antipathy of temperament made resentment an easy passage to hatred, and in Philip the transition seemed to have begun; there was no malignity in his disposition, but there was a susceptibility that made him peculiarly liable to a strong sense of repulsion.

When Maggie came, however, she could not help looking with growing interest at the new schoolfellow, although he was the son of that wicked Lawyer Wakem, who made her father so angry. She had arrived in the middle of school-hours, and had sat by while Philip went through his lessons with Mr. Stelling. Tom, some weeks ago, had sent her word that Philip knew no end of stories—not stupid stories like hers; and she was convinced now from her own observation that he must be very clever—she hoped he would think *her* rather clever too, when she came to talk to him. Maggie, moreover, had rather a tenderness for deformed things; she preferred the wry-necked lambs, because it seemed to her that the lambs which were quite strong and well made wouldn't mind so much about being petted; and she was especially fond of petting objects that would think it very delightful to be petted by her. She loved Tom very dearly, but she often wished that he *cared* more about her loving him.

"I think Philip Wakem seems a nice boy, Tom," she said, when they went out of the study together into the garden, to pass the interval before dinner. "He couldn't choose his father, you know; and I've read of very bad men who had good sons, as well as good parents who had bad children. And if Philip is good, I think we ought to be the more sorry for him because his father is not a good man. *You* like him, don't you?"

"Oh, he's a queer fellow," said Tom, curtly, "and he's as sulky as can be with me, because I told him his father was a rogue. And I'd a right to tell him so, for it was true—and *he* began it, with calling me names."

"I say, Maggie," said Tom at last, shutting his books and putting them away with the angry decision of a perfect master in the art of leaving off, "I've done my lessons now. Come up-stairs with me."

"What is it ?" said Maggie, when they were outside the door, a slight suspicion crossing her mind as she remembered Tom's preliminary visit up-stairs. "It isn't a trick you're going to play me, now ?"

"No, no, Maggie," said Tom, in his most coaxing tone, "it's something you'll like *ever* so.

Frowning with a double amount of intention, if not of corrugation, he (carefully) drew the sword from its sheath and pointed it at Maggie.

"Oh, Tom, please don't," exclaimed Maggie, in a tone of suppressed dread, shrinking away from him into the opposite corner. "I *shall* scream—I'm sure I shall ! Oh don't ! I wish I'd never come up-stairs !"

The corners of Tom's mouth showed an inclination to a smile of complacency that was immediately checked as inconsistent with the severity of a great warrior. Slowly he let down the scabbard on the floor, lest it should make too much noise, and then said, sternly,—

"I'm the Duke of Wellington ! March !" stamping forward with the right leg a little bent, and the sword still pointing towards Maggie, who, trembling, and with tear-filled eyes, got upon the bed, as the only means of widening the space between them.

Tom, happy in this spectator of his military performances, even though the spectator was only Maggie, proceeded, with the utmost exertion of his force, to such an exhibition of the cut and thrust as would necesarily be expected of the Duke of Wellington.

"Tom, I *will not* bear it—I *will* scream," said Maggie, at the first movement of the sword. "You'll hurt yourself ; you'll cut your head off !"

"One—two," said Tom, resolutely, though at "two" his wrist trembled a little. "Three" came more slowly, and with it the sword swung downwards, and Maggie gave a loud shriek. The sword had fallen with its edge on Tom's foot, and in a moment after, he had fallen too. Maggie leaped from the bed, still shrieking, and immediately there was a rush of footsteps to-

wards the room. Mr. Stelling, from his up-stairs study, was the first to enter. He found both the children on the floor. Tom had fainted, and Maggie was shaking him by the collar of his jacket, screaming, with wild eyes. She thought he was dead, poor child! and yet she shook him, as if that would bring him back to life. In another minute she was sobbing with joy because Tom had opened his eyes: she couldn't sorrow yet that he had hurt his foot—it seemed as if all happiness lay in his being alive.

Chapter 6

A LOVE SCENE

Poor Tom bore his severe pain heroically.

It had been Philip's first thought when he heard of the accident—"Will Tulliver be lame? It will be very hard for him if he is"—and Tom's hitherto unforgiven offences were washed out by that pity. Philip felt that they were no longer in a state of repulsion, but were being drawn into a common current of suffering and sad privation. His imagination did not dwell on the outward calamity and its future effect on Tom's life, but it made vividly present to him the probable state of Tom's feeling: he had only lived fourteen years, but those years had, most of them, been steeped in the sense of a lot irremediably hard.

"Mr. Askern, the doctor, says you'll soon be all right again, Tulliver, did you know?" he said, rather timidly, as he stepped gently up to Tom's bed. "I've just been to ask Mr. Stelling, and he says you'll walk as ever again, by-and-by."

Tom looked up with that momentary stopping of the breath which comes with a sudden joy; then he gave a long sigh, and turned his blue-grey eyes straight on Philip's face, as he had not done for a fortnight or more. As for Maggie, this intimation of a possibility she had not thought of before, affected her as a new trouble: the bare idea of Tom's being always lame overpowered the assurance that such a misfortune was not likely to befall him, and she clung to him and cried afresh.

"Don't be a little silly, Maggie," said Tom, tenderly, feeling very brave now. "I shall soon get well."

"Good-bye, Tulliver," said Philip, putting out his small, delicate hand, which Tom clasped immediately with his more substantial fingers.

"I say," said Tom, "ask Mr. Stelling to let you come and sit with me sometimes, till I get up again, Wakem—and tell me about Robert Bruce, you know."

After that, Philip spent all his time out of school-hours with Tom and Maggie. Tom liked to hear fighting stories as much as ever, but he insisted strongly on the fact that those great fighters, who did so many wonderful things and came off unhurt, wore excellent armour from head to foot, which made fighting easy work, he considered. He should not have hurt his foot if he had had an iron shoe on. He listened with great interest to a new story of Philip's about a man who had a very bad wound in his foot, and cried out so dreadfully with the pain that his friends could bear with him no longer, but put him ashore on a desert island, with nothing but some wonderful poisoned arrows to kill animals with for food.

One day, soon after Philip had told this story, he and Maggie were in the study alone together while Tom's foot was being dressed. Philip was at his books, and Maggie, after sauntering idly round the room, not caring to do anything in particular, because she would soon go to Tom again, went and leaned on the table near Philip to see what he was doing, for they were quite old friends now, and perfectly at home with each other.

"Maggie," said Philip, after a minute or two, still leaning his elbow and looking at her, "if you had had a brother like me, do you think you should have loved him as well as Tom?"

Maggie started a little and said, "What?" Philip repeated his question.

"Oh yes, better," she answered, immediately. "No, not better; because I don't think I *could* love you better than Tom. But I should be so sorry—*so sorry* for you."

Philip coloured: he had meant to imply, would she love him as well in spite of his deformity, and yet when she alluded to it

so plainly, he winced under her pity. Maggie, young as she was, felt her mistake. Hitherto she had instinctively behaved as if she were quite unconscious of Philip's deformity: her own keen sensitiveness and experience under family criticism sufficed to teach her this, as well as if she had been directed by the most finished breeding.

"But you are so very clever, Philip, and you can play and sing," she added quickly. "I wish you *were* my brother. I'm very fond of you. And you would stay at home with me when Tom went out, and you would teach me everything—wouldn't you? Greek and everything?"

"But you'll go away soon, and go to school, Maggie," said Philip, "and then you'll forget all about me, and not care for me any more. And then I shall see you when you're grown up, and you'll hardly take any notice of me."

"Why, I think you're fonder of me than Tom is," said Maggie, rather sorrowfully. Then, wondering how she could convince Philip that she could like him just as well, although he was crooked, she said,—

"Should you like me to kiss you, as I do Tom? I will, if you like."

"Yes, very much: nobody kisses me."

Maggie put her arm round his neck and kissed him quite earnestly.

"There now," she said, "I shall always remember you, and kiss you when I see you again, if it's ever so long. But I'll go now, because I think Mr. Askern's done with Tom's foot."

In spite of Philip's new kindness, and Tom's answering regard in this time of his trouble, they never became close friends. When Maggie was gone, and when Tom by-and-by began to walk about as usual, the friendly warmth that had been kindled by pity and gratitude died out by degrees, and left them in their old relation to each other.

Chapter 7

THE GOLDEN GATES ARE PASSED

So Tom went on even to the fifth half-year—till he was turned sixteen—at King's Lorton, while Maggie was growing, with a rapidity which her aunts considered highly reprehensible, at Miss Firniss's boarding-school in the ancient town of Laceham on the Floss, with cousin Lucy for her companion.

She hardly ever saw Philip during the remainder of their school-life; in the Midsummer holidays he was always away at the seaside, and at Christmas she could only meet him at long intervals in the streets of St. Ogg's. When they did meet, she remembered her promise to kiss him, but as a young lady who had been at a boarding-school, she knew now that such a greeting was out of the question, and Philip would not expect it.

But when Mr. Tulliver was actually engaged in the long-threatened lawsuit, and Wakem, as the agent at once of Pivart and Old Harry, was acting against him, even Maggie felt, with some sadness, that they were not likely ever to have any intimacy with Philip again: the very name of Wakem made her father angry.

By the time Tom had reached his last quarter at King's Lorton, the years had made striking changes in him since the day when we saw him returning from Mr. Jacob's academy. He was a tall youth now, carrying himself without the least awkwardness, and speaking without more shyness than was a becoming symptom of blended diffidence and pride: he wore his tail-coat and his stand-up collars, and watched the down on his lip with eager impatience, looking every day at his virgin razor, with which he had provided himself in the last holidays. Philip had already left—at the autumn quarter—that he might go to the south for the winter, for the sake of his health; and this change helped to give Tom the unsettled exultant feeling that usually belongs to the last months before leaving school. This quarter, too, there was some hope of his father's lawsuit being decided: *that* made the prospect of home more entirely pleasurable. For Tom, who had gathered his

view of the case from his father's conversation, had no doubt that Pivart would be beaten.

Tom had not heard anything from home for some weeks—a fact which did not surprise him, for his father and mother were not apt to manifest their affection in unnecessary letters—when, to his great surprise, on the morning of a dark cold day near the end of November, he was told, soon after entering the study at nine o'clock, that his sister was in the drawing-room.

"Why, how is it you're come so early this cold morning, Maggie? Did you come in the gig?" said Tom, as she backed towards the sofa, and drew him to her side.

"No, I came by the coach. I've walked from the turnpike."

"But how is it you're not at school? The holidays have not begun yet?"

"Father wanted me at home," said Maggie, with a slight trembling of the lip. "I came home three or four days ago."

"Isn't my father well?" said Tom, rather anxiously.

"Not quite," said Maggie. "He's very unhappy, Tom. The lawsuit has ended, and I came to tell you, because I thought it would be better for you to know it before you came home, and I didn't like only to send you a letter."

"My father hasn't lost?" said Tom, hastily, springing from the sofa, and standing before Maggie, with his hands suddenly thrust in his pockets.

"Yes, dear Tom," said Maggie, looking up at him with trembling.

Tom was silent a minute or two, with his eyes fixed on the floor. Then he said—

"My father will have to pay a good deal of money, then?"

"Yes," said Maggie, rather faintly.

"Well, it can't be helped," said Tom, bravely, not translating the loss of a large sum of money into any tangible results. "But my father's very much vexed, I daresay?" he added,

looking at Maggie, and thinking that her agitated face was only part of her girlish way of taking things.

"Yes," said Maggie, again faintly. Then, urged to fuller speech by Tom's freedom from apprehension, she said loudly and rapidly, as if the words *would* burst from her, "Oh, Tom, he will lose the mill and the land, and everything; he will have nothing left."

"Where's my father?" he said impatiently. "*Tell* me, Maggie."

"He's at home," said Maggie, finding it easier to reply to that question. "But," she added, after a pause, "not himself........ He fell off his horse.........He has known nobody but me ever since.........He seems to have lost his senses...... Oh, father, father... ..."

With these last words, Maggie's sobs burst forth with the more violence for the previous struggle against them. Tom felt that pressure of the heart which forbids tears: he had no distinct vision of their troubles as Maggie had, who had been at home: he only felt the crushing weight of what seemed unmitigated misfortune. He tightened his arm almost convulsively round Maggie as she sobbed, but his face looked rigid and tearless—his eyes blank—as if a black curtain of cloud had suddenly fallen on his path.

But Maggie soon checked herself abruptly: a single thought had acted on her like a startling sound.

"We must set out, Tom—we must not stay—father will miss me—we must be at the turnpike at ten to meet the coach." She said this with hasty decision, rubbing her eyes, and rising to seize her bonnet.

Tom at once felt the same impulse, and rose too. "Wait a minute. Maggie," he said. "I must speak to Mr. Stelling and then we'll go."

He thought he must go to the study where the pupils were, but on his way he met Mr. Stelling, who had heard from his wife that Maggie appeared to be in trouble when she asked for her brother; and now that he thought the brother and sister

had been alone long enough, was coming to inquire and offer his sympathy.

"Please, sir, I must go home," Tom said, abruptly, as he met Mr. Stelling in the passage. "I must go back with my sister directly. My father's lost his lawsuit—he's lost all his property—and he's very ill."

Mr. Stelling put his hand on Tom's shoulder and said, "God bless you, my boy : let me know how you get on." Then he pressed Maggie's hand ; but there were no audible good-byes. Tom had so often thought how joyful he should be the day he left school "for good !" And now his school-years seemed like a holiday that had come to an end.

The two slight youthful figures soon grew indistinct on the distant road—were soon lost behind the projecting hedgerow.

They had gone forth together into their new life of sorrow, and they would never more see the sunshine undimmed by remembered cares. They had entered the thorny wilderness, and the golden gates of their childhood had for ever closed behind them.

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BOOK THIRD

THE DOWNFALL

Chapter I

WHAT HAD HAPPENED AT HOME

When Mr. Tulliver first knew the fact that the lawsuit was decided against him, and that Pivart and Wakem were triumphant, everyone who happened to observe him at the time thought that, for so confident and hot-tempered a man, he bore the blow remarkably well. He thought so himself: he thought he was going to show that if Wakem or anybody else considered him crushed, they would find themselves mistaken. He could not refuse to see that the costs of this protracted suit would take more than he possessed to pay them; but he appeared to himself to be full of expedients by which he could ward off any results but such as were tolerable, and could avoid the appearance of breaking down in the world. All the obstinacy and defiance of his nature, driven out of their old channel, found a vent for themselves in the immediate formation of plans by which he would meet his difficulties, and remain Mr. Tulliver of Dorlcote Mill in spite of them. There was such a rush of projects in his brain, that it was no wonder his face was flushed when he came away from his talk with his attorney, Mr. Gore, and mounted his horse to ride home from Lindum. There was Furley, who held the mortgage on the land, a reasonable fellow, who would see his own interest, Mr. Tulliver was convinced, and who would be glad not only to purchase the whole estate, including the mill and homestead, but would accept Mr. Tulliver as tenant, and be willing to advance money to be repaid with high interest out of the profit of the business, which would be made over to him, Mr. Tulliver

only taking enough barely to maintain himself and his family. Who would neglect such a profitable investment ? Certainly not Furley, for Mr. Tulliver had determined that Furley should meet his plans with the utmost alacrity ; and there are men whose brains have not yet been dangerously heated by the loss of a lawsuit, who are apt to see in their own interest or desires a motive for other men's actions. There was no doubt (in the miller's mind) that Furley would do just what was desirable ; and if he did, why, things would not be so very much worse. Mr. Tulliver and his family must live more meagrely and humbly, but it would only be till the profits of the business had paid off Furley's advances, and that might be while Mr. Tulliver had still a good many years of life before him. It was clear that the costs of the suit could be paid without his being obliged to turn out of his old place, and look like a ruined man. It was certainly an awkward moment in his affairs. There was that suretyship for poor Riley, who had died suddenly last April, and left his friend saddled with a debt of two hundred and fifty pounds—a fact which had helped to make Mr. Tulliver's banking book less pleasant reading than a man might desire towards Christmas. Well ! he had never been one of those poor-spirited sneaks who would refuse to give a helping hand to a fellow-traveller in this puzzling world. The really vexatious business was the fact that some months ago the creditor who had lent him the five hundred pounds to repay Mrs. Glegg, had become uneasy about his money (set on by Wakem, of course), and Mr. Tulliver, still confident that he should gain his suit, and finding it eminently inconvenient to raise the said sum until that desirable issue had taken place, had rashly acceded to the demand that he should give a bill of sale on his household furniture, and some other effects, as security in lieu of the bond. It was all one, he had said to himself : he should soon pay off the money, and there was no harm in giving that security any more than another. But now the consequences of this bill of sale occurred to him in a new light, and he remembered that the time was close at hand, when it would be enforced unless the money were repaid. Two months ago he would have declared stoutly that he would never be beholden to his wife's friends ; but now he told himself as stoutly that it was nothing but right and natural that Bessy

should go to the Pullets and explain the thing to them : they would hardly let Bessy's furniture be sold, and it might be security to Pullet if he advanced the money—there would, after all, be no gift or favour in the matter. Mr. Tulliver would never have asked for anything from so poor-spirited a fellow for himself, but Bessy might do so if she liked.

It is precisely the proudest and most obstinate men who are the most liable to shift their position and contradict themselves in this sudden manner : everything is easier to them than to face the simple fact that they have been thoroughly defeated, and must begin life anew. And Mr. Tulliver, you perceive, though nothing more than a superior miller and maltster, was as proud and obstinate as if he had been a very lofty personage, in whom such dispositions might be a source of that conspicuous, far-echoing tragedy, which sweeps the stage in regal robes, and makes the dullest chronicler sublime.

There are certain animals to which tenacity of position is a law of life—they can never flourish again, after a single wrench : and there are certain human beings to whom predominance is a law of life—they can only sustain humiliation so long as they can refuse to believe in it, and, in their own conception, predominate still.

The next day Mr. Tulliver was again on horseback in the afternoon on his way to Mr. Gore's office at St. Ogg's. Gore was to have seen Furley in the morning, and to have sounded him in relation to Mr. Tulliver's affairs. But he had not gone half-way when he met a clerk from Mr. Gore's office, who was bringing a letter to Mr. Tulliver. Mr. Gore had been prevented by a sudden call of business from waiting at his office to see Mr. Tulliver, according to appointment, but would be at his office at eleven to-morrow morning, and meanwhile had sent some important information by letter.

"O !" said Mr. Tulliver, taking the letter, but not opening it. "Then tell Gore I'll see him to-morrow at eleven" ; and he turned his horse.

The clerk, struck with Mr. Tulliver's glistening excited glance, looked after him for a few moments, and then rode away. The reading of a letter was not the affair of an instant

to Mr. Tulliver ; he took in the sense of a statement very slowly through the medium of written or even printed characters ; so he had put the letter in his pocket, thinking he would open it in his arm-chair at home. But by-and-by it occurred to him that there might be something in the letter Mrs Tulliver must not know about, and if so, it would be better to keep it out of her sight altogether. He stopped his horse, took out the letter and read it. It was only a short letter ; the substance was, that Mr. Gore had ascertained, on secret but sure authority, that Furley had been lately much straitened for money, and had parted with his securities—among the rest, the mortgage on Mr. Tulliver's property, which he had transferred to—Wakem.

In half an hour after this, Mr. Tulliver's own waggoner found him lying by the roadside insensible, with an open letter near him, and his grey horse snuffing uneasily about him.

Mr. Tulliver sent for her sisters, and there was much wailing and lifting up of hands below stairs : both uncles and aunts saw that the ruin of Bessy and her family was as complete as they had ever foreboded it, and there was a general family sense that a judgment had fallen on Mr. Tulliver, which it would be an impiety to counteract by too much kindness.

Chapter 2

MRS. TULLIVER'S TERAPHIM, OR HOUSEHOLD GOODS

When the coach set down Tom and Maggie, it was five hours since she had started from home, and she was thinking with some trembling that her father had perhaps missed her, and asked for "the little wench" in vain. She thought of no other change that might have happened.

Mrs. Tulliver was not down-stairs—not in any of the bedrooms. There was but one room below the attic which Maggie had left unsearched : it was the store-room, where her mother kept all her linen and all the precious "best things" that were only unwrapped and brought out on special occasions. Tom, preceding Maggie, as they returned along the passage, opened the door of this room, and immediately said, "Mother !"

Mrs. Tulliver was seated there with all her laid-up treasures. One of the linen chests was open: the silver teapot was unwrapped from its many folds of paper, and the best china was laid out on the top of the closed linen-chest; spoons and skewers and ladles were spread in rows on the shelves; and the poor woman was shaking her head and weeping, with a bitter tension of the mouth, over the mark, "Elizabeth Dadson", on the corner of some table-cloths she held in her lap.

She dropped them, and started up as Tom spoke.

"O my boy, my boy!" she said, clasping him round the neck. "To think as I should live to see this day! We're ruined ....everything's going to be sold up ....to think as your father should ha' married me to bring me to this! We've got nothing......we shall be beggars......we must go to the workhouse........."

She kissed him, then seated herself again, and took another tablecloth on her lap. unfolding it a little way to look at the pattern, while the children stood by in mute wretchedness—their minds quite filled for the moment with the words "beggars" and "workhouse".

"To think o' these clothes as I spun myself," she went on, lifting things out and turning them over with an excitement all the more strange and piteous because the stout blond woman was usually so passive: if she had been ruffled before it was at the surface merely: "and Job Haxey wove 'em, and brought the piece home on his back, as I remember standing at the door and seeing him come, before I ever thought o' marrying your father! And the pattern as I chose myself—and bleached so beautiful, and I marked 'em so as nobody ever saw such marking—they must cut the cloth to get it out, for it's a particular stitch. And they're all to be sold—and go into strange people's houses, and perhaps be cut with the knives, and wore out before I'm dead, You'll never have one of 'em, my boy," she said, looking up at Tom with her eyes full of tears, "and I meant 'em for you. I wanted you to have all o' this pattern. Maggie could have had the large check—it never shows so well when the dishes are on it."

Tom was touched to the quick, but there was an angry reaction immediately. His face flushed as he said—

"But will my aunts let them be sold, mother? Do they know about it? They'll never let your linen go, will they? Haven't you sent to them?"

"Yes, I sent Luke directly they'd put the bailies in, and your aunt Pullet's been—and, O dear, O dear, she cries so, and says your father's disgraced my family and made it the talk o' the country; and she'll buy the spotted cloths for herself, because she's never had so many as she wanted o' that pattern, and they shan't go to strangers, but she's got more checks a'ready nor she can do with." (Here Mrs. Tulliver began to lay back the table-clothes in the chest, folding and stroking them automatically.) "And your uncle Glegg's been too, and he says things must be bought in for us to lie down on, but he must talk to your aunt; and they're all coming to consult.........But I know they'll none of 'em take my chany," she added, turning towards the cups and saucers—"for they all found fault with 'em when I bought 'em, 'cause o' the small gold sprig all over 'em, between the flowers. But there's none of 'em got better chany, not even your aunt Pullet herself,—and I bought it wi' my own money as I'd saved ever since I was turned fifteen; and the silver teapot, too—your father never paid for 'em. And to think as he should ha' married me, and brought me to this."

Mrs. Tulliver burst out crying afresh, and she sobbed with her handkerchief at her eyes a few moments, but then removing it, she said in a deprecating way; still half-sobbing, as if she were called upon to speak before she could command her voice—

"And I *did* say to him times and times, "Whatever you do, don't go to law'—and what more could I do? I've had to sit by while my own fortin's been spent, and what should ha' been my children's, too. You'll have never a penny, my boy ......but it isn't your poor mother's fault."

Maggie had witnessed this scene with gathering anger. The implied reproaches against her father—her father, who was lying there in a sort of living death—neutralized all her pity

for griefs about tablecloths and china; and her anger on her father's account was heightened by some egoistic resentment at Tom's silent concurrence with her mother in shutting her out from the common calamity. She had become almost indifferent to her mother's habitual depreciation of her, but she was keenly alive to any sanction of it, however passive, that she might suspect in Tom. Poor Maggie was by no means made up of unalloyed devotedness, but put forth large claims for herself where she loved strongly. She burst out at last in an agitated, almost violent tone, "Mother, how can you talk so? as if you cared only for things with *your* name on, and not for what has my father's name too—and to care about anything but dear father himself!—when he's lying there, and may never speak to us again. Tom, you ought to say so too—you ought not to let any one find fault with my father."

Chapter 3

THE FAMILY COUNCIL

It was at eleven o'clock the next morning that the aunts and uncles came to hold their consultation.

Mr. Deane was not coming—he was away on business; but Mrs. Deane appeared punctually in that handsome new gig with the head to it, and the livery-servant driving it, which had thrown so clear a light on several traits in her character to some of her female friends in St. Ogg's. Mr. Deane had been advancing in the world as rapidly as Mr. Tulliver had been going down in it; and in Mrs. Deane's house, the Dodson linen and plate were beginning to hold quite a subordinate position, as a mere supplement to the handsomer articles of the same kind, purchased in recent years: a change which had caused an occasional coolness in the sisterly intercourse between her and Mrs. Glegg, who felt that Susan was getting "like the rest," and there would soon be little of the true Dodson spirit surviving except in herself, and, it might be hoped, in those nephews who supported the Dodson name on the family land, far away in the Wolds. People who live at a distance are naturally less faulty than those immediately under our own eyes; and it seems superfluous, when we consider the remote geographi-

cal position of the Ethopians, and how very little the Greeks had to do with them, to inquire further why Homer calls them "blameless."

Mr. and Mrs. Glegg were come, and were almost immediately followed by Mr. and Mrs. Pullet.

"I wish it could be managed so as my teapot and chany and the best castors needn't be put for sale," said poor Mrs. Tulliver, beseechingly, "and the sugar-tongs, the first things ever I bought.".

"But that can't be helped, you know," said Mr. Glegg. "If one o' the family chooses to buy 'em in, they can, but one thing must be bid for as well as another."

"And it isn't to be looked for," said uncle Pullet, with unwanted independence of idea, "as your own family should pay more for things nor they'll fetch. They may go for an old song by auction."

"O dear, O dear," said Mrs. Tulliver, "to think o' my chany being sold i' that way—and I bought it when I was married, just as you did yours, Jane and Sophy : and I know you didn't like mine, because o' the sprig, but I was fond of it ; and there's never been a bit broke, for I've washed it myself—and there's the tulips on the cups, and the roses, as anybody might go and look at 'em for pleasure. You wouldn't like *your* chany to go for an old song and be broke to pieces, though yours has got no colour in it, Jane,—it's all white and fluted, and didn't cost so much as mine. And there's the castors, sister Deane, I can't think but you'd like to have the castors, for I've heard you say they're pretty."

"Well, I've no objection to buy some of the best things," said Mrs. Deane, rather loftily ; "we can do with extra things in our house."

"Best things !" exclaimed Mrs. Glegg with severity, which had gathered intensity from her long silence. "It drives me past patience to hear you all talking o' best things, and buying in this, that, and the other, such as silver and chany. You must bring your mind to your circumstances, Bessy, and not be thinking o' silver and chany ; but whether you shall get so

much as a flock bed to lie on, and a blanket to cover you, and a stool to sit on. You must remember, if you get 'em, it'll be because your friends have bought 'em for you, for you're dependent upon *them* for everything; for your husband lies there helpless, and hasn't got a penny i' the world to call his own. And it's for your own good I say this, for it's right you should feel what your state is and what disgrace your husband's brought on your own family, as you've got to look to for everything—and be humble in your mind."

"As to disgrace o' the family," continued Mrs. Glegg, "that can't be helped wi' buying teapots. The disgrace is, for one o' the family to ha' married a man as has brought her to beggary. The disgrace is, as they're to be sold up. We can't hinder the country from knowing that."

Maggie had started up from the sofa at the allusion to her father, but Tom saw her action and flushed face in time to prevent her from speaking. "Be quiet, Maggie," he said, authoritatively, pushing her aside. It was a remarkable manifestation of self command and practical judgment in a lad of fifteen, that when his aunt Glegg ceased, he began to speak in a quiet and respectful manner, though with a good deal of trembling in his voice; for his mother's words had cut him to the quick.

"Then, aunt," he said, looking straight at Mrs. Glegg, "if you think it's a disgrace to the family that we should be sold up, wouldn't it be better to prevent it altogether? And if you and my aunt Pullet," he continued, looking at the latter, "think of leaving any money to me and Maggie, wouldn't it be better to give it now, and pay the debt we're going to be sold up for, and save my mother from parting with her furniture?"

Tom's countenance had fallen during this conversation, and his lip quivered; but he was determined not to give way. He would behave like a man. Maggie, on the contrary, after her momentary delight in Tom's speech, had relapsed into her state of trembling indignation. Her mother had been standing close by Tom's side, and had been slinging to his arm ever since he had last spoken: Maggie suddenly started up and stood

in front of them, her eyes flashing like the eyes of a young lioness.

"Why do you come, then," she burst out, "talking, and interfering with us and scolding us, if you don't mean to do anything to help my poor mother—your own sister—if you've no feeling for her when she's in trouble, and won't part with anything, though you would never miss it, to save her from pain? Keep away from us then, and don't come to find fault with my father—he was better than any of you—he was kind—he would have helped *you*, if you had been in trouble. Tom and I don't ever want to have any of your money, if you won't help my mother. We'd rather not have it! we'll do without you."

"Come, come," said Mr. Glegg, "let's waste no more time in talking—let's go to business. Tom now, get the pen and ink—".

While Mr. Glegg was speaking, a tall dark figure was seen hurrying past the window.

"Why, there's Mrs. Moss," said Mrs. Tulliver. "The bad news must ha' reached her, then"; and she went out to open the door, Maggie eagerly following her.

"That's fortunate," said Mrs. Glegg. "She can agree to the list o' things to be bought in. It's but right she should do her share when it's her own brother."

Mrs. Moss was in too much agitation to resist Mrs. Tulliver's movement, as she drew her into the parlour, automatically, without reflecting that it was hardly kind to take her among so many persons in the first painful moment of arrival.

"O my dear children," she burst out, "you've no call to think well o' me; I'm a poor aunt to you, for I'm one o' them as take all and give nothing. How's my poor brother?"

"Mr. Turnbull thinks he'll get better," said Maggie. "Sit down, aunt Gritty. Don't fret."

"O my sweet child, I feel torn i' two," said Mrs. Moss, allowing Maggie to lead her to the sofa, but still not seeming to notice the presence of the rest. "We've three hundred pounds o' my brother's money, and now he wants it, and you all want it,

poor things !—and yet we must be sold up to pay it, and there's my poor children—eight of 'em, and the little 'un of all can't speak plain. And I feel as if I was a robber. But I'm sure I'd no thought as my brother..."

The poor woman was interrupted by a rising sob.

"Three hundred pounds ! O dear, dear," said Mrs. Tulliver, who, when she had said that her husband had done "unknown" things for his sister, had not had any particular sum in her mind, and felt a wife's irritation at having been kept in the dark.

"What madness, to be sure !" said Mr. Glegg. "A man with a family ! He'd no right to lend his money i' that way ; and without security, I'll be bound, if the truth was known."

Mrs. Glegg's voice had arrested Mrs. Moss's attention, and looking up, she said—

"Yes, there *was* security : my husband gave a note for it. We're not that sort o' people, neither of us, as 'ud rob my brother's children ; and we looked to paying back the money when the times got a bit better."

"Why, there's this to be thought on, Mrs. Moss," said Mr. Glegg, "and it's right to warn you ;—if Tulliver's made a bankrupt, and he's got a note-of-hand of your husband's for three hundred pounds, you'll be obliged to pay it : th' assignees 'ull come on you for it."

"Uncle, "said Tom, looking up suddenly from his meditative view of the table-cloth, "I don't think it would be right for my aunt Moss to pay the money, if it would be against my father's will for her to pay it ; would it ?"

Mr. Glegg looked suprised for a moment or two before he said, "Why no, perhaps not, Tom ; but then he'd ha' destroyed the note, you know. We must look for the note. What makes you think it 'ud be against his will ?"

"Why," said Tom, colouring, but trying to speak firmly, in spite of a boyish tremor, "I remember quite well, before I went to school to Mr. Stelling, my father said to me one night, when we were sitting by the fire together, and no one else was in the room..."

Tom hesitated a little, and then went on.

"He said something to me about Maggie, and then he said, 'I've always been good to my sister, though she married against my will—and I've lent Moss money ! but I shall never think of distressing him to pay it : I'd rather lose it. My children must not mind being the poorer for that.' And now my father's ill, and not able to speak for himself, I shouldn't like anything to be done contrary to what he said to me."

"Well," said Mr. Glegg, who had been meditating after Tom's words, "we shouldn't be doing any wrong by the creditors, supposing your father *was* bankrupt. I've been thinking o' that, for I've been a creditor myself, and seen no end o' cheating. If he meant to give your aunt the money before ever he got into this sad work o' lawing, it's the same as if he'd made away with the note himself ; for he'd made up his mind to be that much poorer. But there's a deal o' things to be considered, young man," Mr. Glegg added, looking admonishingly at Tom, "when you come to money business, and you may be taking one man's dinner away to make another man's breakfast. You don't understand that, I doubt ?"

"Yes, I do," said Tom, decidedly. "I know if I owe money to one man, I've no right to give it to another. But if my father had made up his mind to give my aunt the money before he was in debt, he had a right to do it."

"Well done, young man ! I didn't think you'd been so sharp," said Uncle Glegg, with much candour. "But perhaps your father *did* make away with the note. Let us go and see if we can find it in the chest."

"It's in my father's room. Let us go too, aunt Gritty," whispered Maggie.

Chapter 4

A VANISHING GLEAM

Mr. Tulliver, even between the fits of spasmodic rigidity which had recurred at intervals ever since he had been found fallen from his horse, was usually in so apathetic a condition that the exits and entrances into his room were not felt to be

of great importance. He had lain so still, with his eyes closed, all this morning, that Maggie told her aunt Moss she must not expect her father to take any notice of them.

"There's a tin box," whispered Mr. Glegg; "he'd most like put a small thing like a note in there. Lift it out, Tom; but I'll just lift up those deeds—they're the deeds o' the house and mill, I suppose—and see what there is under 'em."

Mr. Glegg had lifted out the parchments, and had fortunately drawn back a little, when the iron holder gave way and the heavy lid fell with a loud bang, that resounded over the house.

Perhaps there was something in that sound more than the mere fact of the strong vibration that produced the instantaneous effect on the frame of the prostrate man, and for the time completely shook off the obstruction of paralysis. The chest had belonged to his father and his father's father, and it had always been rather a solemn business to visit it. All long-known objects, even a mere window-fastening or a particular door-latch, have sounds which are a sort of recognized voice to us—a voice that will thrill and awaken, when it has been used to touch deep-lying fibres. In the same moment when all the eyes in the room were turned upon him, he started up and looked at the chest, the parchments in Mr. Glegg's hand, and Tom holding the tin box, with a glance of perfect consciousness and recognition.

"What are you going to do with those deeds?" he said, in his ordinary tone of sharp questioning whenever he was irritated. "Come here, Tom. What do you do, going to my chest?"

"Yes, father. And haven't you a note from my uncle Moss for three hundred pounds? We came to look for that. What do you wish to be done about it, father?"

"Ah! I'm glad you thought o' that, my lad," said Mr. Tulliver. "I allays meant to be easy about that money, because o' your aunt. You mustn't mind losing the money, if they can't pay it—and it's like enough they can't. The note's in that box, mind! I allays meant to be good to you,

Gritty," said Mr. Tulliver, turning to his sister ; "but, you know, you aggravated me when you would have Moss,"

At this moment Maggie re-entered with her mother, who came in much agitated by the news that her husband was quite himself again.

"Well, Bessy," he said, as she kissed him, "you must forgive me if you're worse off than you ever expected to be. But it's the fault o' the law—it's none o' mine," he added, angrily. "It's the fault of raskills ! Tom - you mind this : if ever you've got the chance, you make Wakem smart. If you don't, you're a good-for-nothing son. You might horsewhip him—but he'd set the law on you—the law's made to take care o' raskills."

Mr. Tulliver was getting excited, and an alarming flush was on his face. Mr. Glegg wanted to say something soothing but he was prevented by Mr. Tulliver's speaking again to his wife. "They'll make a shift to pay everything, Bessy," he said, "and yet leave you your furniture ; and your sisters 'll do something for you...and Tom 'll grow up...though what he's to be I don't know...I've done what I could...I've given him a eddication and there's the little wench, she'll get married...but it's a poor tale..."

The sanative effect of the strong vibration was exhausted, and with the last words the poor man fell again, rigid and insensible.

Chapter 5

TOM APPLIES HIS KNIFE TO THE OYSTER

The next day, at ten o'clock, Tom was on his way to St. Ogg's, to see his uncle Deane, who was to come home last night, his aunt had said ; and Tom had made up his mind that his uncle Deane was the right person to ask for advice about getting some employment. He was in a great way of business ; he had not the narrow notions of uncle Glegg : and he had risen in the world on a scale of advancement which accorded with Tom's ambition.

He had heard his father say, long ago, how Deane had made himself so valuable to Guest & Co. that they were glad enough

to offer him a share in the business: that was what Tom resolved *he* would do.

At the bank Tom was admitted into the private room where his uncle was, immediately after sending in his name. Mr. Deane was auditing accounts; but he looked up as Tom entered, and, putting out his hand, said, "Well, Tom, nothing fresh the matter at home, I hope? How's your father?"

"Much the same, thank you, uncle," said Tom feeling nervous. "But I want to speak to you, please, when you're at liberty."

"Sit down, sit down," said Mr. Deane.

"Well, Tom," said Mr. Deane, "what's the business, my boy—what's the business?" Mr. Deane, who had heard from his wife what had passed the day before, thought Tom was come to appeal to him for some means of averting the sale.

"I hope you'll excuse me for troubling you, uncle," said Tom, colouring, but speaking in a tone which, though tremulous, had a certain proud independence in it; "but I thought you were the best person to advise me what to do."

"Ah?" said Mr. Deane, reserving his pinch of snuff, and looking at Tom with new attention, "let us hear."

"I want to get a situation, uncle, so that I may earn some money," said Tom, who never fell into circumlocution.

"A situation?" said Mr. Deane, and then took his pinch of snuff with elaborate justice to each nostril. Tom thought snuff-taking a most provoking habit.

"You've had a good deal of schooling, however: I suppose you're pretty well up in accounts, eh? You understand book-keeping?"

"No," said Tom, rather falteringly. "I was in Practice. But Mr. Stelling says I write a good hand, uncle. That's my writing," added Tom, laying on the table a copy of the list he had made yesterday.

"Ah! that's good, that's good. But, you see, the best hand in the world 'll not get you a better place than a copying clerk's, if you know nothing of book-keeping—nothing of

accounts. And a copying clerk's a cheap article. But what have you been learning at school, then ?"

Mr. Deane had not occupied himself with methods of education, and had no precise conception of what went forward in expensive schools.

"We learned Latin," said Tom, pausing a little between each item, as if he were turning over the books in his school-desk to assist his memory—"a good deal of Latin ; and the last year I did Themes, one week in Latin and one in English ; and Greek and Roman History ; and Euclid ; and I began Algebra, but I left it off again ; and we had one day every week for Arithmetic.

"Ah, ay, sir," said Mr. Deane, spreading himself in his chair a little, and entering with great readiness into a retrospect of his own career. "But I'll tell you how I got on. It wasn't by getting astride a stick and thinking it would turn into a horse if I sat on it long enough. I kept my eyes and ears open, sir, and I wasn't too fond of my own back, and I made my master's interest my own. Why, with only looking into what went on in the mill, I found out how there was a waste of five hundred a-year that might be hindered. Why, sir, I hadn't more schooling to begin with than a charity boy ; but I saw pretty soon that I couldn't get on far w'thout mastering accounts, and I learned 'em between working hours, after I'd been unlading. Look here." Mr. Deane opened a book, and pointed to the page. "I write a good hand enough, and I'll match anybody at all sorts of reckoning by the head, and I got it all by hard work, and paid for it out of my own earnings—often out of my own dinner and supper. And I looked into the nature of all the things we had to do with in the business, and picked up knowledge as I went about my work, and turned it over in my head. Why, I'm no mechanic—I never pretended to be—but I've thought of a thing or two that the mechanics never thought of, and it's made a fine difference in our returns. And there isn't an article shipped or unshipped at our wharf but I know the quality of it. If I got places, sir, it was because I made myself fit for 'em. If you want to slip into a round hole, you must make a ball of yourself—that's where it is."

....

"What did my uncle Deane say, Tom?" said Maggie, putting her arm through Tom's as he was warming himself rather drearily by the kitchen fire. "Did he say he would give you a situation?"

"No, he didn't say that. He didn't quite promise me anything; he seemed to think I couldn't have a very good situation. I'm too young."

"But didn't he speak kindly, Tom?"

"Kindly? Pooh! what's the use of talking about that? I wouldn't care about his speaking kindly, if I could get a situation. But it's such a nuisance and bother—I've been at school all this while learning Latin and things—not a bit of good to me—and now my uncle says, I must set about learning book-keeping and calculation, and those things. He seems to make out I'm good for nothing."

Tom's mouth twitched with a bitter expression as he looked at the fire.

"O what a pity we haven't got Dominie Sampson," said Maggie, who couldn't help mingling some gaiety with their sadness. "If he had taught me book-keeping by double entry and after the Italian method, as he did Lucy Bertram, I could teach you, Tom."

"*You* teach! Yes, I daresay. That's always the tone you take," said Tom.

"Dear Tom! I was only joking," said Maggie, putting her cheek against his coat sleeve.

"But it's always the same, Maggie," said Tom, with the little frown he put on when he was about to be justifiably severe. "You're always setting yourself up above me and every-one else, and I've wanted to tell you about it several times. You ought not to have spoken as you did to my uncles and aunts—you should leave it to me to take care of my mother and you, and not put yourself forward. You think you know better than anyone, but you're almost always wrong. I can judge much better than you can."

Poor Tom! he had just come from being lectured and made to feel his inferiority: the reaction of his strong, self-asserting nature must take place somehow; and here was a case in which he could justly show himself dominant. Maggie's cheek flushed and her lip quivered with conflicting resentment and affection, and a certain awe as well as admiration of Tom's firmer and more effective character. She did not answer immediately; very angry words rose to her lips, but they were driven back again, and she said at last—.

"You often think I'm conceited, Tom, when I don't mean what I say at all in that way. I don't mean to put myself above you—I know you behaved better than I did yesterday. But you are always so harsh to me, Tom."

With the last words the resentment was rising again.

"No I'm not harsh," said Tom, with severe decision. "I'm always kind to you: and so I shall be: I shall always take care of you. But you must mind what I say."

Chapter 6

TENDING TO REFUTE THE POPULAR PREJUDICE AGAINST THE PRESENT OF A POCKET-KNIFE

In that dark time of December, the sale of the household furniture lasted beyond the middle of the second day. Mr. Tulliver, who had begun, in his intervals of consciousness, to manifest an irritability which often appeared to have as a direct effect the recurrence of spasmodic rigidity and insensibility, had lain in this living death throughout the critical hours when the noise of the sale came nearest to his chamber.

But it was over at last—that time of importunate certainty and eye-straining suspense. The sharp sound of a voice, almost as metallic as the rap that followed it, had ceased, the tramping of footsteps on the gravel had died out. Mrs. Tulliver's blond face seemed aged ten years by the last thirty hours: the poor woman's mind had been busy divining when her favourite things were being knocked down by the terrible hammer; her heart had been fluttering at the thought that first one thing and then another had gone to be identified as hers in the hateful

publicity of the Golden Lion ; and all the while she had to sit and make no sign of this inward agitation.

Already, at three o'clock Kezia, the good-hearted, bad-tempered housemaid, who regarded all people that came to the sale as her personal enemies, the dirt on whose feet was of a peculiarly vile quality, had begun to scrub and swill with an energy much assisted by a continual low muttering against "folks as came to buy up other folk's things", and made light of "scrazing" the tops of mahogany tables over which better folks than themselves had had to—suffer a waste of tissue through evaporation.

It was between five and six o'clock, near the usual teatime, when she came up-stairs and said that Master Tom was wanted. The person who wanted him was in the kitchen, and in the first moments, by the imperfect fire and candle-light, Tom had not even an indefinite sense of any acquaintance with the rather broad-set but active figure, perhaps two years older than himself, that looked at him with a pair of blue eyes set in a disc of freckles, and pulled some curly red locks with a strong intention of respect.

"Sarvant, Mister Tom," said he of the red locks, with a smile which seemed to break through a self-imposed air of melancholy. "You don't know me again, I doubt," he went on, as Tom continued to look at him inquiringly ; but I'd like to talk to you by yourself a bit, please."

"There's fire i' the parlour, Master Tom," said Kerzia, who objected to leave the kitchen in the crisis of toasting.

"Come this way, then," said Tom.

"Why ! you don't remember Bob, then, as you gen the pocket-knife, Mr. Tom ?"

The rough-handled pocket-knife was taken out in the same moment, and the largest blade opened by way of irresistible demonstration.

"What ! Bob Jakin ?" said Tom—not with any cordial delight, for he felt a little ashamed of that intimacy symbolized by the pocket-knife, and was not at all sure that Bob's motives for recalling it were entirely admirable.

'Ay, ay, Bob Jakin—if Jakin it must be, 'cause there's so many Bobs, as you went after the squerrils with, that day as I plumped right down from the bough, and bruised my shins a good un—but I got the squerril tight for all that, an' a scratter it was. An' this littlish blade's broke, you see, but I wouldn't hev a new un put in, 'cause they might be cheatin' me an' given' me another knife istid, for there isn't such a blade i' the country—it's got used to my hand, like. An' there was niver nobody else gen me nothin' but what I got by my own sharpness, only you, Mr. Tom; if it wasn't Bill Fawks as gen me the terrier pup istid o' drowndin' it, an' I had to jaw him a good un afore he'd give it me."

"Well, Bob," said Tom, with a slight air of patronage, the foregoing reminiscences having disposed him to be as friendly as was becoming, though there was no part of his acquaintance with Bob that he remembered better than the cause of their parting quarrel; "is there anything I can do for you?"

"Why, no, Mr. Tom," answered Bob, shutting up his knife with a click and returning it to his pocket, where he seemed to be feeling for something else. "I shouldn't ha' come back upon you know y're i' trouble, an' folks say as the master, as I used to frighten the birds for, an' he flogged me a bit for fun when he catched me eatin' the turnip, as they say he'll niver lift up his yead no more—I shouldn't ha' come now to ax you to gi' me another knife, 'cause you gen me one afore."

Bob had drawn out a dirty canvas bag, and would perhaps not have paused just then if Maggie had not entered the room and darted a look of surprise and curiosity at him, whereupon he pulled his red locks again with due respect. But the next moment the sense of the altered room came upon Maggie with a force that overpowered the thought of Bob's presence. Her eyes had immediately glanced from him to the place where the bookcase had hung; there was nothing now but the oblong unfaded space on the wall, and below it the small table with the Bible and the few other books.

"O Tom," she burst out, clapsing her hands, "where are the books? I thought my uncle Glegg said he would buy them—didn't he?—are those all they've left us?"

"I suppose so," said Tom, with a sort of desperate indifference. "Why should they buy many books when they bought so little furniture ?"

Maggie turned away from the table and threw herself into a chair, with the big tears ready to roll down her cheeks—quite blinded to the presence of Bob, who was looking at her with the pursuant gaze of an intelligent dumb animal, with perceptions more perfect than his comprehension.

"Well, Bob," said Tom, feeling that the subject of the books was unseasonable; "I suppose you just came to see me because we're in trouble ? That was very good-natured of you."

"I'll tell you how it is Master Tom," said Bob, beginning to untwist his canvas bag. "You see, I'n been with a barge this two 'ear—that's how I'n been gettin' my livin'—if it wasn't when I was tentin' the furnace, between whiles, at Torry's mill. But a fortni't ago I'd a rare bit o' luck—I allays thought I was a lucky chap, for I niver set a trap but what I catched so'thing ; but it wasn't a trap, it was a fire i' Torry's mill, an' I doused it, else it 'ud ha' set th' oil alight, an' the gentleman gave me ten suvreigns—he gen me 'em himself last week. An' he said first, I was a sperrited chap—but I knowed that afore—but then he outs wi' the ten suvreigns, an' that war summat new. Here they are—all but one !" Here Bob emptied the convas bag on the table. "An' when I'd got 'em, my head was all of a boil like a kettle o' broth, thinkin' what sort o' life I should take to —for there war a many trades I'd thought on ; for as for the barge, I'm clean tired out wi't, for it pulls the days out till they're as long as pigs' chitterlings. An' I thought first I'd ha' ferrets an' dogs, an' be a rat-kether ; an' then I thought as I should like a bigger way o' life, as I didn't know so well ; I'n seen to the bottom o' rat-ketching ; an' I thought an' thought till at last I settled I'd be a packman, for the're knowin fellers, the packmen are—an' I'd carry the lightest things I could i' my pack—an' there'd be a use for a feller's tongue, as is no use, neither wi' rats nor barges. An' I should go about the country far' wide, an' come round the women wi' my tongue, an' get my dinner hot at the public—lors ! it it 'ud be a lovely life !"

Bob paused, and then said, with defiant decision, as if resolutely turning his back on that paradisaic picture—

"But I don't mind about it, not a chip! An' I'n changed one o' the suvreigns to buy my mother a goose for dinner, an' I'n bought a blue plush wescoat an' a sealskin cap—for if I meant to be a packman, I'd do it respectable. But I don't mind about it—not a chip! My yead isn't a turnup, an' I shall p'r'aps have a chance o' dousing another fire afore long. I'm a lucky chap. So I'll think you to take the nine suvreigns, Mr. Tom; and set yoursen up with 'em somehow—if it's true as the master's broke. They mayn't go fur enough—but they'll help."

Tom was touched keenly enough to forget his pride and suspicion.

"You're a very kind fellow, Bob," he said, colouring, with that little, diffident tremor in his voice, which gave a certain charm even to Tom's pride and severity, "and I sha'n't forget you again, though I didn't know you this evening. But I can't take the nine sovereigns: I should be taking your little fortune from you, and they wouldn't do me much good either."

"Let me put the sovereigns in the bag again," said Maggie; "and you'll come and see us when you've bought your pack, Bob."

"It's like as if I'd come out o' make-blieve, o' purpose to show 'em you," said Bob, with an air of discontent, as Maggie gave him the bag again, "a-taking 'em back i' this way. I *am* a bit of a Do, you know; but it isn't that sort o' Do: it's on'y when a feller's a big rogue, or a big flat, I like to let him in a bit, that's all."

"Now; don't you be up to any tricks, Bob," said Tom, "else you'll get transported some day."

"No, no; not me, Mr. Tom," said Bob, with an air of cheerful confidence. "There's no law again' fleabites. If I wasn't to take a fool in now and then, he'd never get any wiser. But, lors! hev a suvreign to buy you and Miss summat, on'y for a token—just to match my pocket-knife."

While Bob was speaking he did down the sovereign, and resolutely twisted up his bag again. Tom pushed back the

gold, and said, "No, indeed, Bob ; thank you heartily ; but I can't take it." And Maggie, taking it between her fingers, held it up to Bob, and said, more persuasively—

"Not now—but perhaps another time. If ever Tom or my father wants help that you can give, we'll let you know—won't we, Tom? That's what you would like—to have us always depend on you as a friend that we can go to—isn't it, Bob?"

"Yes, Miss, and thank you," said Bob, reluctantly taking the money ; "that's what I'd like—anything as you like. An' I wish you good-bye, Miss, and good-luck, Mr. Tom, and thank you for shaking hands wi' me, *though* you wouldn't take the money."

Chapter 7

HOW A HEN TAKES TO STRATAGEM

The days passed, and Mr. Tulliver showed, at least to the eyes of the medical man, stronger and stronger symptoms of a gradual return to his normal condition.

While Mr. Tulliver was slowly becoming himself again, his lot was hastening towards its moment of most palpable change. The taxing-masters had done their work like any respectable gunsmith conscientiously preparing the musket, that, duly pointed by a brave arm, will spoil a life or two.

By the beginning of the second week in January the bills were out advertising the sale, under a decree of the Chancery, of Mr. Tulliver's farming and other stock, to be followed by a sale of the mill and land, held in the proper after-dinner hour at the Golden Lion. The miller himself, unaware of the lapse of time, fancied himself still in that first stage of his misfortunes when expedients might be thought of ; and often in his conscious hours talked in a feeble, disjointed manner, of plans he would carry out when he "got well". The wife and children were not without hope of an issue that would at least save Mr. Tulliver from leaving the old spot, and seeking an entirely strange life. For uncle Deane had been induced to interest himself in this stage of the business. It would not,

he acknowledged, be a bad speculation for Guest and Co. to buy Dorlcote Mill, and carry on the business, which was a good one, and might be increased by the addition of steam-power; in which case Tulliver might be retained as manager.

But all this while Mrs. Tulliver was brooding over a scheme by which she, and no one else, would avert the result most to be dreaded, and prevent Wakem from entertaining the purpose of bidding for the mill. Imagine a truly respectable and amiable hen, by some portentous anomaly, taking to reflection and inventing combinations by which she might prevail on Hodge not to wring her neck, or send her and her chicks to market: the result could hardly be other than much crackling and fluttering. Mrs. Tulliver, seeing that everything had gone wrong, had begun to think that she had been too passive in life; and that, if she had applied her mind to business, and taken a strong resolution now and then, it would have been all the better for her and her family. Nobody, it appeared, had thought of going to speak to Wakem on this business of the mill; and yet, Mrs. Tulliver reflected, it would have been quite the shortest method of securing the right end. And certainly towards herself—whom he knew to have been a Miss Dodson—it was out of all possibility that he could entertain anything but good-will, when it was once brought home to his observation that she, for her part, had never wanted to go to law, and indeed was at present disposed to take Mr. Wakem's view of all subjects rather than her husband's. In fact, if that attorney saw a respectable matron like herself disposed "to give him good words," why shouldn't he listen to her representations? For she would put the matter clearly before him, which had never been done yet. And he would never go and bid for the mill on purpose to spite her, an innocent woman, who thought it likely enough that she had danced with him in their youth at Squire Darleigh's, for at those big dances she had often and often danced with young men whose names she had forgotten.

This unusual concentration of thought naturally gave Mrs. Tulliver an unusual power of device and determination; and a day or two before the sale, to be held at the Golden Lion, when there was no longer any time to be lost, she

carried out her plan by a stratagem. There were pickles in question—a large stock of pickles and ketchup which Mrs. Tulliver possessed, and which Mr. Hyndmarsh the grocer would certainly purchase if she could transact the business in a personal interview, so she would walk with Tom to St. Ogg's that morning: and when Tom urged that she might let the pickles be, at present—he didn't like her to go about just yet—she appeared so hurt at this conduct in her son, contradicting her about pickles which she had made after the family recipes inherited from his own grand-mother, who had died when his mother was a little girl, that he gave way, and they walked together until she turned towards Danish Street, where Mr. Hyndmarsh retailed the grocery, not far from the offices of Mr. Wakem.

That gentleman was not yet come to his office: would Mrs. Tulliver sit down by the fire in his private room and wait for him? She had not long to wait before the punctual attorney entered, knitting his brow with an examining glance at the stout blond woman who rose, curtsying deferentially.

"Mrs. Tulliver, I think?" said Mr. Wakem.

"Yes, sir. Miss Elizabeth Dodson as was."

"Pray be seated. You have some business with me?"

"Well, sir, yes," said Mrs. Tulliver, beginning to feel alarmed at her own courage, now she was really in presence of the formidable man, and reflecting that she had not settled with herself how she should begin. Mr. Wakem felt in his waistcoat pockets, and looked at her in silence.

"I hope, sir" she began at last—"I hope, sir, you're not a-thinking as I bear you any ill-will because o' my husband's losing his lawsuit, and the bailies being put in, and the linen being sold—O dear!... for I wasn't brought up in that way. I'm sure you remember my father, sir, for he was close friends with Squire Darleigh, and we allays went to the dances there—the Miss Dodsons—nobody could be more looked on—and justly, for there was four of us, and you're quite aware as Mrs. Glegg and Mrs. Deane are my sisters. And as for going to law, and losing money, and having sales before you're dead, I never saw anything o' that before I was married, nor for a

long while after. And I'm not to be answerable for my bad luck i' marrying out o' my own family into one where the goings-on was different. And as for being drawn in t' abuse you as other folks abuse you, sir, *that* I niver was, and nobody can say it of me."

Mrs. Tulliver shook her head a little, and looked at the hem of her pocket-handkerchief.

"I've no doubt of what you say, Mrs. Tulliver," said Mr. Wakem, with cold politeness. "But you have some question to ask me?"

"Well, sir, yes. But that's what I've said to myself—I've said you'd have some nat'ral feeling; and as for my husband, as hasn't been himself for this two months, I'm not a-defending him, in no way, for being so hot about th' erigation—not but what there's worse men, for he never wronged nobody of a shilling nor a penny, not willingly—and as for his fieriness and lawing, what could I do? And him struck as if it was with death when he got the letter as said you'd the hold upo' the land. But I can't believe but what you'll behave as a gentleman."

"What does all this mean, Mrs. Tulliver?" said Mr. Wakem rather sharply. "What do you want to ask me?"

"Why, sir, if you'll be so good," said Mrs. Tulliver, starting a little, and speaking more hurriedly, "if you'll be so good not to buy the mill an' the land—the land wouldn't so much matter, only my husband 'ull be like mad at your having it."

Something like a new thought flashed across Mr. Wakem's face as he said, "Who told you I meant to buy it?"

"Why, sir, it's none o' my inventing; and I should never ha' thought of it, for my husband, as ought to know about the law, he allays used to say as lawyers had never no call to buy anything - either lands or houses—for they allays got 'em into their hands other ways. An' I should think that 'ud be the way with you, sir; and I niver said as you'd be the man to do contrairy to that."

"Ah, well, who was it that *did* say so?" said Wakem, opening his desk, and moving things about, with the accompaniment of an almost inaudible whistle.

"Why, sir, it was Mr. Glegg and Mr. Deane, as have all the management: and Mr. Deane thinks as Guest and Co. 'ud buy the mill and let Mr. Tulliver work it for 'em, if you didn't bid for it and raise the price."

"What! Guest and Co. would keep the mill in their own hands, I suppose, and pay your husband wages?"

"O dear, sir, it's hard to think of," said poor Mrs. Tulliver a little tear making its way, "as my husband should take wage. But it 'ud look more like what used to be, to stay at the mill than to go anywhere else; and if you'll only think—if you was to bid for the mill and buy it, my husband might be struck worse than he was before, and niver get better again as he's getting now."

"Well, but if I bought the mill, and allowed your husband to act as my manager in the same way, how then?" said Mr. Wakem.

"O sir, I doubt he could niver be got to do it, not if the very mill stood still to beg and pray of him. For your name's like poison to him, it's so as niver was; and he looks upon it as you've been the ruin of him all along, ever since you set the law on him about the road through the meadow—that's eight year ago, and he's been going on ever since—as I've allays told him he was wrong....."

"He's a pig-headed, foul-mouthed fool!" burst out Mr. Wakem, forgetting himself.

"O dear, sir!" said Mrs. Tulliver, frightened at a result so different from the one she had fixed her mind on; "I wouldn't wish to contradict you, but it's like enough he's changed his mind with this illness—he's forgot a many things he used to talk about."

Mr. Wakem rose, opened the door, and called to one of his clerks.

"You must excuse me for interrupting you, Mrs. Tulliver; I have business that must be attended to; and I think there is nothing more necessary to be said."

"But if you *would* bear it in mind, sir" said Mrs. Tulliver, rising, "and not run against me and my children; and I'm not

denying Mr. Tulliver's been in the wrong, but he's been punished enough, and there's worse men, for it's been giving to other folks has been his fault. He's done nobody any harm but himself and his family—the more's the pity—and I go and look at the bare shelves every day, and think where all my things used to stand".

"Yes, yes, I'll bear it in mind," said Mr. Wakem, hastily, looking towards the open door.

Poor Mrs. Tulliver's voice trembled a little, and she could make no answer to the attorney's "good morning", but curtsied and walked out in silence.

Although, when Mr. Wakem entered his office that morning, he had had no intention of purchasing Dorlcote Mill, his mind was already made up: Mrs. Tulliver had suggested to him several determining motives, and his mental glance was very rapid: he was one of those men who can be prompt without being rash, because their motives run in fixed tracks, and they have no need to reconcile conflicting aims.

Now Mrs. Tulliver had put the notion into his head, it presented itself to him as a pleasure to do the very thing that would cause Mr. Tulliver the most deadly mortification—and a pleasure of a complex kind, not made up of crude malice, but mingling with it the relish of self-approbation. To see an enemy humiliated gives a certain contentment, but this is jejune compared with the highly blent satisfaction of seeing him humiliated by your benevolent action or concession on his behalf. That is a sort of revenge which falls into the scale of virtue, and Wakem was not without an intention of keeping that scale respectably filled. He had once had the pleasure of putting an old enemy of his into one of the St. Ogg's almshouses, to the rebuilding of which he had given a large subscription; and here was an opportunity of providing for another by making him his own servant.

Chapter 8

DAYLIGHT ON THE WRECK

It was a clear frosty January day on which Mr. Tulliver first came down-stairs: the bright sun on the chestnut boughs

and the roofs opposite his window had made him impatiently declare that he would be caged up no longer: he thought every where would be more cheery under this sunshine than his bed-room.

Guest and Co. had not bought the mill: both mill and land had been knocked down to Wakem, who had been over the premises, and had laid before Mr. Deane and Mr. Glegg, in Mrs. Tulliver's presence, his willingness to employ Mr. Tulliver, in case of his recovery, as a manager of the business. This proposition had occasioned much family debating. Uncles and aunts were almost unanimously of opinion that such an offer ought not to be rejected when there was nothing in the way but a feeling in Mr. Tulliver's mind, which, as neither aunts nor uncles shared it, was regarded as entirely unreasonable and childish—indeed, as a transferring towards Wakem of that indignation and hatred which Mr. Tulliver ought properly to have directed against himself for his general quarrelsomeness, and his special exhibition of it in going to law. Here was an opportunity for Mr. Tulliver to provide for his wife and daughter without any assistance from his wife's relations, and without that too evident descent into pauperism which makes it annoying to respectable people to meet the degraded member of the family by the way-side.

Tom had protested against entertaining the proposition: he shouldn't like his father to be under Wakem; he thought it would look mean-spirited; but his mother's main distress was the utter impossibility of ever "turning Mr. Tulliver round about Wakem," or getting him to hear reason—no, they would all have to go and live in a pigsty on purpose to spite Wakem, who spoke "so as nobody could be fairer," Indeed, Mrs. Tulliver's mind was reduced to such confusion by living in this strange medium of unaccountable sorrow, against which she continually appealed by asking, "O dear, what *have* I done to deserve worse than other women?" that Maggie began to suspect her poor mother's wits were quite going.

"Ah!" said Mr. Tulliver slowly, moving towards his chair, "they've sold me up.........they've sold me up."

Then seating himself, and laying down his stick, while Luke left the room, he looked round again.

"They'n left the big Bible," he said. "It's got everything in—when I was born and married—bring it me, Tom,"

The quarto Bible was laid open before him at the fly-leaf, and while he was reading with slowly-travelling eyes, Mrs. Tulliver entered the room, but stood in mute surprise to find her husband down already, and with the great Bible before him.

"Ah," he said, looking at a spot where his finger rested, "my mother was Magaret Beaton—she died when she was forty-seven: hers wasn't a long-lived family—we're our mother's children—Gritty and me are—we shall go to our last bed before long."

He seemed to be pausing over the record of his sister's birth and marriage, as if it were suggesting new thoughts to him: then he suddenly looked up at Tom, and said, in a sharp tone of alarm—

"They haven't come upo' Moss for the money as I lent him, have they?"

"No, father," said Tom, "the note was burnt."

Mr. Tulliver turned his eyes on the page again, and presently said—

"Ah......Elizabeth Dodson...........it's eighteen year since I married her........."

"Come next Ladyday," said Mrs. Tulliver, going up to his side and looking at the page.

Her husband fixed his eyes earnestly on her face.

"Poor Bessy," he said, "you was a pretty lass then—everybody said so—and I used to think you kept your good-looks rarely. But you're sorely aged......don't you bear me ill-will...... I meant to do well by you......We promised one another for better or for worse......"

"But I never thought it 'ud be so for worse as this," said poor Mrs. Tulliver, with the strange, scared look that had come over her of late, "and my poor father gave me away...and to come on so all at once......"

"O mother," said Maggie, "don't talk in that way."

"No, I know you won't let your poor mother speak...... that's been the way all my life......your father never minded what I said . it u'd have been o' no use for me to beg and pray ......and it 'ud be no use now, not if I was to go down o' my hands and knees......"

"Don't say so, Bessy," said Mr. Tulliver, whose pride, in these first moments of humiliation, was in abeyance to the sense of some justice in his wife's reproach. "If there's anything left as I could do to make you amends, I wouldn't say you nay."

"Then we might stay here and get a living, and I might keep among my own sisters......and me been such a good wife to you, and never crossed you from week's end to week's end......and they all say so......they say it 'ud be nothing but right......only you're so turned against Wakem."

"Mother," said Tom, severely, "this is not the time to talk about that."

"Let her be," said Mr. Tulliver. "Say what you mean, Bessy."

"Why, now the mill and the land's all Wakem's and he's got everything in his hands, what's the use o' setting your face against him ?—when he says you may stay here, and speaks as fair as can be, and says you may manage the business, and have thirty shillings a-week, and a horse to ride about to market ? And where have we got to put our heads ? We must go into one o' the cottages in the village......and me and my children brought down to that......and all because you must set your mind against folks till there's no turning you."

Mr. Tulliver had sunk back in his chair, trembling.

"You may do as you like wi' me, Bessy," he said in a low voice ; "I'n been the bringing of you to poverty......this world's too many for me......I'm nought but a bankrupt—it's no use standing up for anything now."

"Father," said Tom, "I don't agree with my mother or my uncles, and I don't think you ought to submit to be under

Wakem. I get a pound a-week now, and you can find something else to do when you get well."

"Say no more, Tom, say no more : I've had enough for this day. Give me a kiss, Bessy, and let us bear one another no ill-will : we shall never be young again. This world's been too many for me."

Chapter 9

AN ITEM ADDED TO THE FAMILY REGISTER

That first moment of renunciation and submission was followed by days of violent struggle in the miller's mind, as the gradual access of bodily strength brought with it increasing ability to embrace in one view all the conflicting conditions under which he found himself. Feeble limbs easily resign themselves to be tethered, and when we are subdued by sickness it seems possible to us to fulfil pledges which the old vigour comes back and breaks. There were times when poor Tulliver thought the fulfilment of his promise to Bessy was something quite too hard for human nature : he had promised her without knowing what she was going to say—she might as well have asked him to carry a ton weight on his back. But again, there were many feelings arguing on her side, besides the sense that life had been made hard to her by having married him. He saw a possibility, by much pinching, of saving money out of his salary towards paying a second dividend to his creditors, and it would not be easy elsewhere to get a situation such as he could fill.

"Dear heart, Mr. Tulliver, what can you be thinking of ?" said his wife.

"I don't think you're quite so well to-night, are you father ?" said Maggie ; "you seem uneasy."

"Why, how is it Tom doesn't come ?" said Mr. Tulliver, impatiently. (Tom had got a job in the firm of Messrs. Guest & Company with the help of his Uncle Deane. He used to go to work in the morning and return in the evening.)

"Dear heart ! is it time ? I must go and get his supper,"

said Mrs. Tulliver, laying down her knitting, and leaving the room.

"It's nigh upon half-past eight," said Mr. Tulliver. "He'll be here soon. Go, go and get the big Bible, and open it at the beginning, where everything's set down. And get the pen and ink."

Maggie obeyed, wondering: but her father gave no futher orders, and only sat listening for Tom's footfall on the gravel, apparently irritated by the wind, which had risen and was roaring so as to drown all other sounds. There was a strange light in his eyes that rather frightened Maggie: *she* began to wish that Tom would come, too.

"There he is, then," said Mr. Tulliver, in an excited way, when the knock came at last. Maggie went to open the door, but her mother came out of the kitchen hurriedly, saying, "Stop a bit, Maggie; I'll open it."

Mrs. Tulliver had begun to be a little frightened at her boy, but she was jealous of every office others did for him.

"Your supper's ready by the kitchen fire, my boy," she said, as he took off his hat and coat. "You shall have it by yourself, just as you like and I won't speak to you".

"I think, my father wants Tom, mother," said Maggie; "he must come into the parlour first."

Tom entered with his usual saddened evening face, but his eyes fell immediately on the open Bible and the inkstand and he glanced with a look of anxious surprise at his father, who was saying—

"Come, come—you're late—I want you."

"Is there anything the matter, father?" said Tom.

"You sit down—all of you," said Mr. Tulliver, peremptorily. "And, Tom, sit down here; I've got something for you to write i' the Bible.

They all three sat down, looking at him. He began to speak, slowly, looking first at his wife.

"I've made up my mind, Bessy, and I'll be as good as my word to you. There's the same grave made for us to lie down

in, and we mustn't be bearing one another ill-will. I'll stop in the old place, and I'll serve under Wakem—and I'll serve him like an honest man: there's no Tulliver but what's honest, mind that, Tom"—here his voice rose: "they'll have it to throw up against me as I paid a dividend—but it wasn't my fault—it was because there's raskills in the world. They've been too many for me, and I must give in. I'll put my neck in harness—for you've a right to say as I've brought you into trouble, Bessy—and I'll serve him as honest as if he was no raskill: I'm an honest man, though I shall never hold my head up no more—I'm a tree as is broke—a tree as is broke."

He paused, and looked on the ground. Then suddenly raising his head, he said in a louder yet deeper tone—

"But I won't forgive him! I know what they say—he never meant me any harm—that's the way Old Harry props up the raskills—he's been at the bottom of everything—but he's a fine gentleman—I know, I know. I shouldn't ha' gone to law, they say. But who made it so as there was no arbitratin', and no justice to be got? It signifies nothing to him—I know that: he's one o' them fine gentlemen as get money by doing business for poorer folks, and when he's made beggars of 'em, he'll give 'em charity. I won't forgive him! I wish he might be punished with shame till his own son 'ud like to forget him. I wish he may do summat as they'd make him work at the treadmill! But he won't—and he's too big a raskill to let the law lay hold on him. And you mind this, Tom—you never forgive him, neither, if you mean to be my son. There'll may be come a time when you may make him feel—it'll never come to me—I'n got my head under the yoke. Now write—write it i' the Bible."

"O father, what?" said Maggie, sinking down by his knee, pale and trembling. "It's wicked to curse and bear malice."

"It isn't wicked, I tell you," said her father, fiercely. "It's wicked as the raskills should prosper—it's the devil's doings. Do as I tell you, Tom. Write."

"What am I to write, father?" said Tom, with gloomy submission.

"Write as your father, Edward Tulliver, took service under John Wakem, the man as had helped to ruin him, because I'd promised my wife to make her what amends I could for her trouble, and because I wanted to die in th' old place, where I was born and my father was born. Put that i' the right words—you know how—and then write, as I don't forgive Wakem, for all that ; and for all I'll serve him honest, I wish evil may befall him. Write that."

There was dead silence as Tom's pen moved along the paper : Mrs. Tulliver looked scared, and Maggie trembled like a leaf.

"Now let me hear what you've wrote," said Mr. Tulliver. Tom read aloud, slowly.

"Now write—write as you'll remember what Wakem's done to your father, and you'll make him and his feel it, if ever the day comes. And sign your name Thomas Tulliver."

"O no, father, dear father !" said Maggie, almost choked with fear. "You shouldn't make Tom write that."

"Be quiet, Maggie !" said Tom. I *shall* write it."

BOOK FOURTH

THE VALLEY OF HUMILIATION

Chapter I

A VARIATION OF PROTESTANTISM UNKNOWN TO BOSSUET

It is a sordid life, you say, this of the Tullivers and Dodsons—irradiated by no sublime principles, no romantic visions, no active, self-renouncing faith—moved by none of those wild, uncontrollable passions which create the dark shadows of misery and crime—without that primitive rough simplicity of wants, that hard submissive ill-paid toil, that child-like spelling-out of what nature has written, which gives its poetry to peasant life. Here, one has conventional worldly notions and habits without instruction and without polish—surely the most prosaic form of human life: proud respectability in a gig of unfashionable build: worldliness without side-dishes. Observing these people narrowly, even when the iron hand of misfortune has shaken them from their unquestioning hold on the world, one sees little trace of religion, still less of a distinctively Christian creed. Their belief in the Unseen, so for as it manifests itself seems to be rather of a pagan kind; their moral notions, though held with strong tenacity, seem to have no standard beyond hereditary custom. You could not live among such people; you are stifled for want of an outlet towards something beautiful, great, or noble; you are irritated with these dull men and women, as a kind population out of keeping with the earth on which they live—with this rich plain where the great river flows for ever onward, and links the small pulse of the old English town with the beatings of the world's mighty heart.

Certainly the religious and moral ideas of the Dodsons and Tullivers were of too specific a kind to be arrived at deduc-

tively, from the statement that they were part of the Protestant population of Great Britain. Their theory of life had its core of soundness, as all theories must have on which decent and prosperous families have been reared and have flourished; but it had the very slightest tincture of theology. If, in the maiden days of the Dodson sisters, their Bibles opened more easily at some parts than others, it was because of dried tulip-petals, which had been distributed quite impartially, without preference for the historical, devotional, or doctrinal.

The Dodsons were a very proud race, and their pride lay in the utter frustration of all desire to tax them with a breach of traditional duty or propriety. A wholesome pride in many respects, since it identified honour with perfect integrity, thoroughness of work, and faithfulness to admitted rules: and society owes some worthy qualities in many of her members to mothers of the Dodson class, who made their butter and their fromenty well, and would have felt disgraced to make it otherwise. To be honest and poor was never a Dodson motto, still less to seem rich though being poor; rather, the family badge was to be honest and rich; and not only rich, but richer than was supposed.

A conspicuous quality in the Dodson character was its genuineness: its vices and virtues alike were phases of a proud, honest egoism, which had a heartly dislike to whatever made against its own credit and interest, and would be frankly hard of speech to inconvenient "kin", but would never forsake or ignore them—would not let them want bread, but only require them to eat it with bitter herbs.

The same sort of traditional belief ran in the Tulliver veins, but it was carried in richer blood, having elements of generous imprudence, warm affection, and hot-tempered rashness. Mr. Tulliver's grandfather had been heard to say that he was descended from one Ralph Tulliver, a wonderfully clever fellow, who had ruined himself. It is likely enough that the clever Ralph was a high liver, rode spirited horses, and was very decidedly of his own opinion. On the other hand, nobody had ever heard of a Dodson who had ruined himself: it was not the way of that family.

If such were the views of life on which the Dodsons and Tullivers had been reared in the praiseworthy past of Pitt and high prices, you will infer from what you already know concerning the state of society in St. Ogg's, that there had been no highly modifying influence to act on them in their maturer life. It was still possible, even in that later time of anti-Catholic preaching, for people to hold many pagan ideas, and believe themselves good church-people notwithstanding ; so we need hardly feel any surprise at the fact that Mr. Tulliver, though a regular church-goer, recorded his vindictiveness on the fly-leaf of his Bible. It was not that any harm could be said concerning the vicar of that charming rural parish to which Dorlcote Mill belonged : he was a man of excellent family, an irreproachable bachelor, of elegant pursuits, had taken honours, and held a fellowship. Mr. Tulliver regarded him with dutiful respect, as he did everything else belonging to the church service ; but he considered that church was one thing and common sense another, and he wanted nobody to tell *him* what common sense was.

Chapter 2

THF TORN NEST IS PIERCED BY THE THORNS

There is something sustaining in the very agitation that accompanies the first shocks of trouble, just as an acute pain is often a stimulus, and produces an excitement which is transient strength. It is in the slow, changed life that follows —in the time when sorrow has become stale, and has no longer an emotive intensity that counteracts its pain—in the time when day follows day in dull unexpectant sameness, and trial is a dreary routine ;—it is then that despair threatens ; it is then that the peremptory hunger of the soul is felt, and eye and ear are strained after some unlearned secret of our existence, which shall give to endurance the nature of satisfaction.

This time of utmost need was come to Maggie, with her short span of thirteen years. To the usual precocity of the girl, she added that early experience of struggle, of conflict between the inward impulse and outward fact, which is the lot of every imaginative and passionate nature ; and the years

since she hammered the nails into her wooden Fetish among the worm-eaten shelves of her attic, had been filled with so eager a life in a triple world of Reality, Books and Waking Dreams that Maggie was strangely old for her years in everything except in her entire want of that prudence and self-command which were the qualities that made Tom manly in the midst of his intellectual boyishness. And now her lot was beginning to have a still, sad monotony, which threw her more than ever on her inward self. Her father was able to attend to business again, his affairs were settled, and he was acting as Wakem's manager on the old spot. Tom went to and fro every morning and evening, and became more and more silent in the short intervals at home: what was there to say? One day was like another, and Tom's interest in life, driven back and crushed on every other side, was concentrating itself into the one channel of ambitious resistance to misfortune. The peculiarities of his father and mother were very irksome to him, now they were laid bare of all the softening accompaniments of an easy prosperous home; for Tom had very clear prosaic eyes, not apt to be dimmed by mists of feeling or imagination. Poor Mrs. Tulliver, it seemed, would never recover her old self—her placid household activity: how could she? The objects among which her mind had moved complacently were all gone—all the little hopes, and schemes, and speculations, all the pleasant little cares about her treasures which had made this world quite comprehensible to her for a quarter of a century, since she had made her first purchase of the sugar-tongs, had been suddenly snatched away from her and she remained bewildered in this empty life.

Mr. Tulliver lingered nowhere away from home: he hurried away from market, he refused all invitations to stay and chat, as in old times, in the houses where he called on business. He could not be reconciled with his lot: there was no attitude in which his pride did not feel its bruises; and in all behaviour towards him, whether kind or cold, he detected an allusion to the change in his circumstances. Even the days on which Wakem came to ride round the land and inquire into the business, were not so black to him as those market-days on which he had met several creditors who had accepted a composition from him. To save something towards the repay-

ment of those creditors, was the object towards which he was now bending all his thoughts and efforts; and under the influence of this all-compelling demand of his nature, the somewhat profuse man, who hated to be stinted or to stint anyone else in his own house, was gradually metamorphosed into the keen-eyed grudger of morsels. Mrs. Tulliver could not economise enough to satisfy him in their food and firing; and he would eat nothing himself but what was of the coarsest quality. Tom, though depressed and strongly repelled by his father's sullenness, and the dreariness of home, entered thoroughly into his father's feelings about paying the creditors; and the poor lad brought his first quarter's money, with a delicious sense of achievement, and gave it to his father to put into the tin box which held the savings. The little store of sovereigns in the tin box seemed to be the only sight that brought a faint beam of pleasure into the miller's eyes—faint and transient, for it was soon dispelled by the thought that the time would be long—perhaps longer than his life—before the narrow savings could remove the hateful incubus of debt. A deficit of more than five hundred pounds, with the accumulating interest, seemed a deep pit to fill with the savings from thirty shillings a-week, even when Tom's probable savings were to be added.

Chapter 3

A VOICE FROM THE PAST

One afternoon, when the chestnuts were coming into flower, Maggie had brought her chair outside the front door, and was seated there with a book on her knees.

Suddenly she was roused by the sound of the opening gate and of footsteps on the gravel. It was not Tom who was entering, but a man in a sealskin cap and a blue plush waistcoat, carrying a pack on his back, and followed closely by a bull-terrier of brindled coat and defiant aspect.

"O Bob, it's you!" said Maggie, starting up with a smile of pleased recognition, for there had been no abundance of kind acts to efface the recollection of Bob's generosity; "I'm so glad to see you."

"Thank you, Miss," said Bob, lifting his cap and showing a delighted face, but immediately relieving himself of some accompanying embarrassment by looking down at his dog, and saying in a tone of disgust, "Get out wi' you, you thunderin' sawney!"

"My brother is not at home yet, Bob," said Maggie; "he is always at St. Ogg's in the daytime."

"Well, Miss," said Bob, "I should be glad to see Mr. Tom—but that isn't just what I'm come for—look here!"

Bob was in the act of depositing his pack on the doorstep, and with it a row of small books fastened together with string. Apparently however, they were not the object to which he wished to call Maggie's attention, but rather something which he had carried under his arm, wrapped in a red handkerchief.

"See here!" he said again, laying the red parcel on the others and unfolding it; "you won't think I'm a makin' too free Miss, I hope, but I lighted on these books, and I thought they might make up to you a bit for them as you've lost; for I heard you speak o' picturs—an' as for picturs, *look* here!"

The opening of the red handkerchief had disclosed a superannuated *Keepsake* and six or seven numbers of a *Portrait Gallery*, in royal octavo; and the emphatic request to look referred to a portrait of George the Fourth in all the majesty of his depressed cranium and voluminous neckcloth.

"And you've bought them for me, Bob?" said Maggie, deeply touched by this simple kindness. "How very, very good of you! But I'm afraid you gave a great deal of money for them."

"Not me!" said Bob. "I'd ha' gav three times the money, if they'll make up to you a bit for them as was sold away from you, Miss. For I'n niver forgot how you looked when you fretted about the books bein' gone—it's stuck by me as if it was a pictur hingin' before me. An' I hope you won't say me nay, an' tell me as you won't have 'em, like Mr. Tom did wi' the suvreigns."

"No, indeed, Bob," said Maggie, "I'm very thankful to you

for thinking of me, and being so good to me and Tom. I don't think anyone ever did such a kind thing for me before. I haven't many friends who care for me."

"Hev a dog, Miss! – they're better friends nor any Christian," said Bob, laying down his pack again, which he had taken up with the intention of hurrying away; for he felt considerable shyness in talking to a young lass like Maggie, though, as he usually said of himself, "his tongue overrun him" when he began to speak. "I can't give you Mumps 'cause he'd break his heart to go away from me—eh, Mumps, what do you say, you riff-raff?"—(Mumps declined to express himself more diffusely than by a single affirmative movement of his tail.) "But I'd get you a pup, Miss, an' welcome."

"No, thank you, Bob. We have a yard dog, and I mayn't keep a dog of my own. You don't call Mumps a cur, I suppose?" said Maggie, divining that any interest she showed in Mumps would be gratifying to his master.

"No, Miss, a fine way off that," said Bob with a pitying smile; "Mumps is as fine a cross as you'll see anywhere along the Floss, an' I'n been up it wi' the barge times enoo. Why, the gentry stops to look at him; but you won't catch Mumps a-looking at the gentry much—he minds his own business, he does."

The expression of Mumps's face, which seemed to be tolerating the superfluous existence of objects in general, was strongly confirmatory of this high praise

"He looks dreadfully surly," said Maggie. "Would he let me pat him?"

"Ah, that would he, and thank you. He knows his company, Mumps does. He isn't a dog as 'ull be caught wi' gingerbread: he'd smell a thief a good deal stronger nor the gingerbread he would. Lors, I talk to him by th' hour together when I'm walking i' lone places, and if I'n done a bit o' mischief, I allays tell him. I'n got no secrets but what Mumps knows 'em. He knows about my big thumb, he does."

"Your big thumb—what's that, Bob?" said Maggie.

"That's what it is, Miss," said Bob, quickly, exhibiting a

singularly broad specimen of that difference between the man and the monkey. "It tells i' measuring out the flannel, you see. I carry flannel, 'cause it's light for my pack, an' it's dear stuff, you see, so a big thumb tells. I clap my thumb at the end o' the yard and cut o' the hither side of it, and the old women aren't up to't."

"But, Bob," said Maggie, looking serious, "that's cheating: I don't like to hear you say that."

"Don't you, Miss?" said Bob, regretfully. "Then I'm sorry I said it. But I'm so used to talking to Mumps, an' he doesn't mind a bit o' cheating, when it's them skinflint women, as haggle and haggle, an' 'ud like to get their flannel for nothing, an' 'ud niver ask theirselves how I got my dinner out on't. I niver cheat anybody as doesn't want to cheat me, Miss—lors, I'm a honest chap, I am; only I must hev a bit o' sport, an' now I don't go wi' the ferrets, I'n got no varmint to come over but them haggling women. I wish you good evening, Miss."

"Good-bye, Bob. Thank you very much for bringing me the books. And come again to see Tom."

"Yes, Miss," said Bob, moving on a few steps; then turning half round, he said, "I'll leave off that trick wi' my big thumb, if you don't think well on me for it, Miss—but it 'ud be a pity, it would. I couldn't find another trick so good—an' what 'ud be the use o' havin' a big thumb? It might as well ha' been narrer."

Maggie, thus exalted into Bob's directing Madonna, laughed in spite of herself; at which her worshipper's blue eyes twinkled too, and under these favouring auspices he touched his cap and walked away.

Mangie's sense of loneliness, and utter privation of joy, had deepened with the brightness of advancing spring. All the favourite out-door nooks about home, which seemed to have done their part with her parents in nurturing and cherishing her, were now mixed up with the home-sadness, and gathered no smile from the sunshine. Every affection, every delight the poor child had had, was like an aching nerve to her. There was no music for her any more—no piano, no harmonised voices,

no delicious stringed instruments, with their passionate cries of imprisoned spirits sending a strange vibration through her frame.

The discouragement deepened as the days went on, and the eager heart gained faster and faster on the patient mind. Somehow, when she sat at the window with her book, her eyes *would* fix themselves blankly on the out-door sunshine; then they would fill with tears, and sometimes, if her mother was out in the room, the studies would all end in sobbing. She rebelled against her lot, she fainted under its loneliness, and fits even of anger and hatred towards her father and mother, who were so unlike what she would have them to be—towards Tom, who checked her, and met her thought or feeling always by some thwarting difference—would flow out over her affections and conscience like a lava stream, and frighten her with the sense that it was not difficult for her to become a demon.

This afternoon, the sight of Bob's cheerful freckled face had given her discontent a new direction. She thought it was part of the hardship of her life that there was laid upon her the burthen of larger wants than others seemed to feel—that she had to endure this wide hopeless yearning for that something, whatever it was, that was greatest and best on this earth. She wished she could have been like Bob, with his easily satisfied ignorance, or like Tom, who had something to do on which he could fix his mind with a steady purpose, and disregard everything else.

At last Maggie's eyes glanced down on the books that lay on the window-shelf, and she half forsook her reverie to turn over listlessly the leaves of the *Portrait Gallery*, but she soon pushed this aside to examine the little row of books tied together with string. *Beauties of the Spectator*, *Rasselas*, *Economy of Human Life*, *Gregory's Letters*—she knew the sort of matter that was inside all these: the *Christian Year*—that seemed to be a hymn-book, and she laid it down again; but Thomas a Kempis?—the name had come across her in her reading, and she felt the satisfaction, which everyone knows, of getting some ideas to attach to a name that strays solitary in the memory. She took up the little, old, clumsy book with some curiosity.

Maggie turned from leaf to leaf and read where the quiet hand pointed......"Know that the love of thyself doth hurt thee more than anything in the world......If thou seekest this or that, and wouldst be here or there to enjoy thy own will and pleasure, thou shalt never be quiet nor free from care : for in everything somewhat will be wanting, and in every place there will be some that will cross thee......Both above and below, which way soever thou dost turn thee, everywhere thou shalt find the Cross : and everywhere of necessity thou must have patience, if thou wilt have inward peace, and enjoy an everlasting crown ... ...If thou desire to mount unto this height, thou must set out courageously, and lay the axe to the root, that thou mayst pluck up and destroy that hidden inordinate inclination to thyself, and unto all private and earthly good. On this sin, that a man inordinately loveth himself, almost all dependeth, whatsoever is thoroughly to be overcome ; which evil being once overcome and subdued, there will presently ensue great peace and tranquillity."

A strange thrill of awe passed through Maggie while she read, as if she had been awakened in the night by a strain of solemn music, telling of beings whose souls had been astir while hers was in stupor.

Maggie drew a long breath and pushed her heavy hair back, as if to see a sudden vision more clearly. Here, then, was a secret of life that would enable her to renounce all other secrets—here was a sublime height to be reached without the help of outward things—here was insight, and strength and conquest, to be won by means entirely within her own soul, where a supreme Teacher was waiting to be heard.

With all the hurry of an imagination that could never rest in the present, she sat in the deepening twilight forming plans of self-humilitation and entire devotedness ; and, in the ardour of first discovery, renunciation seemed to her the entrance into that satisfaction which she had so long been craving in vain.

Hanging diligently over her sewing, Maggie was a sight anyone might have been pleased to look at. That new inward life

of hers, notwithstanding some volcanic upheavings, of imprisoned passions, yet shone out in her face with a tender soft light that mingled itself as added loveliness with the gradually enriched colour and outline of her blossoming youth. Her mother felt the change in her with a sort of puzzled wonder that Maggie should be "growing up so good" ; it was amazing that this once "contrairy" child was become so submissive, so backward to assert her own will.

BOOK FIFTH

WHEAT AND TARES

Chapter I

IN THE RED DEEPS

The family sitting-room was a long room with a window at each end : one looking towards the croft and along the Ripple to the banks of the Floss, the other into the mill-yard. Maggie was sitting with her work against the latter window when she saw Mr. Wakem entering the yard, as usual, on his fine black horse ; but not alone, as usual. Someone was with him—a figure in a cloak, on a handsome pony. Maggie had hardly time to feel that it was Philip come back, before they were in front of the window, and he was raising his hat to her ; while his father, catching the movement by a side-glance, looked sharply round at them both.

Maggie hurried away from the window and carried her work upstairs ; for Mr. Wakem sometimes came in and inspected the books, and Maggie felt that the meeting with Philip would be robbed of all pleasure in the presence of the two fathers. Some day, perhaps, she should see him when they could just shake hands, and she could tell him that she remembered his goodness to Tom, and the things he had said to her in the old days, though they could never be friends any more.

It was far on in June now, and Maggie was inclined to lengthen the daily walk which was her one indulgence ; but this day and the following she was so busy with work which must be finished that she never went beyond the gate, and satisfied her need of the open air by sitting out of doors. One of her frequent walks, when she was not obliged to go to St. Ogg's, was into a thicket called the Red Deeps.

In her childish days Maggie held this place, called the Red Deeps, in very great awe, and needed all her confidence in Tom's bravery to reconcile her to an excursion thither—visions of robbers and fierce animals haunting every hollow. But now it had the charm for her which any broken ground, any mimic rock and ravine, have for the eyes that rest habitually on the level.

One day, she was calmly enjoying the free air, while she looked up at the old fir-trees, and thought that those broken ends of branches were the records of past storms, which had only made the red stems soar higher. But while her eyes were still turned upward, she became conscious of a moving shadow cast by the evening sun on the grassy path before her, and looked down with a startled gesture to see Philip Wakem, who first raised his hat, and then, blushing deeply, came forward to her and put out his hand. Maggie, too, coloured with surprise, which soon gave way to pleasure. She put out her hand and looked down at the deformed figure before her with frank eyes, filled for the moment with nothing but the memory of her child's feelings—a memory that was always strong in her. She was the first to speak.

"You startled me," she said, smiling faintly; "I never meet anyone here. How came you to be walking here? Did you come to meet *me*?"

It was impossible not to perceive that Maggie felt herself a child again.

"Yes, I did," said Philip, still embarrassed: "I wished to see you very much. I watched a long while yesterday on the bank near your house to see if you would come out, but you never came. Then I watched again to-day, and when I saw the way you took, I kept you in sight and came down the bank, behind there. I hope you will not be displeased with me."

"No," said Maggie, with simple seriousness, walking on, as if she meant Philip to accompany her, "I'm very glad you came, for I wished very much to have an opportunity of speaking to you. I've never forgotten how good you were long ago to Tom, and me too; but I was not sure that you

would remember us so well. Tom and I have had a great deal of trouble since then, and I think *that* makes one think more of what happened before the trouble came."

"I can't believe that you have thought of me so much as I have thought of you," said Philip, "You are very much more beautiful than I thought you would be."

"Am I?" said Maggie. She turned her face away from him and took some steps, looking straight before her in silence, as if she were adjusting her consciousness to this new idea.

She stood still when they were in the hollow, and, looking at Philip again, she said in a serious, sad voice—

"I wish we could have been friends—I mean, if it would have been good and right for us."

"I know—I see all that you mean," he said in a voice that had become feebler from discouragement: "I know what there is to keep us apart on both sides. But it is not right, Maggie—don't you be angry with me, I am so used to call you Maggie in my thoughts—it is not right to sacrifice everything to other people's unreasonable feelings. I would give up a great deal for *my* father; but I would not give up a friendship or—or an attachment of any sort, in obedience to any wish of his that I didn't recognise as right."

"I don't know," said Maggie, musingly. "Often, when I have been angry and discontented, it has seemed to me that I was not bound to give up anything; and I have gone on thinking till it has seemed to me that I could think away all my duty. But no good has ever come of that—it was an evil state of mind. I'm quite sure that whatever I might do, I should wish in the end that I had gone without anything for myself, rather than have made my father's life harder to him."

"But would it make his life harder, if we were to see each other sometimes?" said Philip. He was going to say something else, but checked himself.

"O, I'm sure he wouldn't like it. Don't ask me why, or anything about it," said Maggie, in a distressed tone. "My father feels so strongly about some things. He is not at all happy."

"Well, then," said he, turning quickly round and fixing his grey eyes entreatingly in her face, "I should be contented to live, if you would let me see you sometimes." Then, checked by a fear which her face suggested, he looked away again, and said more calmly, "I have no friend to whom I can tell everything—no one who cares enough about me; and if I could only see you now and then, and you would let me talk to you a little, and show me that you cared for me—and that we may always be friends in heart, and help each other—then I might come to be glad of life."

"But how can I see you, Philip?" said Maggie, falteringly. (Could she really do him good? It would be very hard to say "good-bye" this day, and not to speak to him again. Here was a new interest to vary the days—it was so much easier to renounce the interest before it came.)

"If you would let me see you here sometimes—walk with you here—I would be contented if it were only once or twice in a month. *That* could injure no one's happiness, and it would sweeten my life. Besides," Philip went on, with all the inventive astuteness of love at one-and-twenty, "if there is any enmity between those who belong to us, we ought all the more to try and quench it by our friendship—I mean, that by our influence on both sides we might bring about a healing of the wounds that have been made in the past, if I could know everything about them. And I don't believe there is any enmity in my own father's mind: I think he has proved the contrary."

"I can't say either yes or no," she said at last, turning round and walking towards the way she had come; "I must wait, lest I should decide wrongly. I must seek for guidance."

"May I come again, then—to-morrow—or the next day—or next week?"

"I think I had better write," said Maggie, faltering again. "I have to go to St. Ogg's sometimes, and I can put the letter in the post."

"O no," said Philip, eagerly, "that would not be so well. My father might see the letter—and—he has not any enmity, I believe, but he views things differently from me: he thinks a great deal about wealth and position. Pray let me come here

once more. *Tell* me when it shall be ; or if you can't tell me, I will come as often as I can till I do see you".

"I think it must be so, then," said Maggie, "for I can't be quite certain of coming here any particular evening."

Maggie went home, with an inward conflict already begun ; Philip went home to do nothing but remember and hope. You can hardly help blaming him severely. He was four or five years older than Maggie, and had a full consciousness of his feeling towards her to aid him in foreseeing the character his contemplated interviews with her would bear in the opinion of a third person. But you must not suppose that he was capable of a gross selfishness, or that he could have been satisfied without persuading himself that he was seeking to infuse some happiness into Maggie's life -- seeking this even more than any direct ends for himself.

And he clutched passionately the possibility that she *might* love him : perhaps the feeling would grow, if she could come to associate him with that watchful tenderness which her nature would be so keenly alive to. If any woman could love him, surely Maggie was that woman : there was such wealth of love in her, and there was no one to claim it all. Then—the pity of it, that a mind like hers should be withering in its very youth, like a young forest-tree, for want of the light and space it was formed to flourish in ! Could he not hinder that, by persuading her out of her system of privation ? He would be her guardian angel ; he would do anything, bear anything for her sake—except not seeing her.

Chapter 2

AUNT GLEGG LEARNS THE BREADTH OF BOB'S THUMB

From what you have seen of Tom, I think he is not a youth of whom you would prophesy failure in anything he had thoroughly wished : the wagers are likely to be on his side, notwithstanding his small success in classics. For Tom had never desired success in this field of enterprise ; and for getting a fine flourishing growth of stupidity there is nothing like pouring out on a mind a good amount of subjects in which it

feels no interest. But now Tom's strong will bound together his integrity, his pride, his family regrets, and his personal ambition, and made them one force, concentrating his efforts and surmounting discouragements. His uncle Deane, who watched him closely, soon began to conceive hopes of him, and to be rather proud that he had brought into the employment of the firm a nephew who appeared to be made of such good commercial stuff.

Already, in the second year, Tom's salary was raised; but all, except the price of his dinner and clothes, went home into the tin box; and he shunned comradeship, lest it should lead him into expenses in spite of himself.

Bob Jakin, who rarely returned from one of his rounds without seeing Tom and Maggie, awaited him on the bridge as he was coming home from St. Ogg's one evening, that they might have a little private talk. He took the liberty of asking if Mr. Tom had ever thought of making money by trading a bit on his own account. Trading, how? Tom wished to knew. Why, by sending out a bit of a cargo to foreign ports; because Bob had a particular friend who had offered to do a little business for him in that way in Laceham goods, and would be glad to serve Mr. Tom on the same footing. Tom was interested at once, and begged for full explanation; wondering he had not thought of this plan before. He was so well pleased with the prospect of a speculation that might change the slow process of addition into multiplication, that he at once determined to mention the matter to his father, and get his consent to appropriate some of the savings in the tin box to the purchase of a small cargo. Mr. Tulliver, however, refused to entertain this proposition whereupon, Tom determined to ask his uncle Glegg to venture twenty pounds, on condition of receiving five per cent of the profits. That was really a very small thing to ask. So when Bob called the next day at the wharf to know the decision, Tom proposed that they should go together to his uncle Glegg's to open the business; for his diffident pride clung to him, and made him feel that Bob's tongue would relieve him from some embarrassment.

Mr. Glegg at the pleasant hour of four in the afternoon of a hot August day, was naturally counting his wall-fruit to assure himself that the sum total had not varied since yesterday. To him entered Tom, in what appeared to Mr. Glegg very questionable companionship : that of a man with a pack on his back—for Bob was equipped for a new journey—and of a huge brindled bull-terrier.

"Heigh ! heigh ! keep that dog back, will you ?" he shouted.

"It's my dog, sir," said the ready Bob. "An' it's me as put Mr. Tom up to the bit o' business : for Mr. Tom's been a friend o' mine iver since I was a little chap : fust thing iver I did was frightenin' the birds for th' old master. An' if a bit o' luck turns up, I'm allays thinkin' if I can let Mr. Tom have a pull at it. An' it's a downright roarin' shame, as when he's got the chance of making a bit o' money wi' sending goods out —ten or twelve per zent clear, when freight an' commission's paid—as he shouldn't lay hold o' the chance for want o' money. An' when there's the Laceham goods—lors ! they're made o' purpose for folks as want to send out a little cargoy ; light, an, take up no room—you may pack twenty pound so as you can't see the passill : an' they're manifacturs as please fools, so I reckon they aren't like to want a market. An' I'd go to Laceham an' buy in the goods for Mr. Tom along wi' my own. An' there's the shupercargo o' the bit of a vessel as is going to take 'em out—I knew him partic'lar ; he's a solid man, an' got a family i' the town here. Salt, his name is—an' a briny chap he is, too—an' if you don't believe me, I can take you to him."

Uncle Glegg stood open-mouthed with astonishment at this unembarrassed loquacity, with which his understanding could hardly keep pace. He looked at Bob, first over his spectacles, then through them, then over them again ; while Tom, doubtful of his uncle's impression, began to wish he had not brought this singular Aaron or mouthpiece : Bob's talk appeared less seemly, now someone besides himself was listening to it.

"You seem to be a knowing fellow," said Mr. Glegg, at last.

"Ay, sir, you say true," returned Bob, nodding his head aside ; "I think my head's all alive inside like an old cheese, for

I'm so full o' plans, one knocks another over. If I hadn't Mumps to talk to, I should get top-heavy an' tumble in a fit. I suppose it's because I niver went to school much. That's what I jaw my old mother for. I says, 'you should ha' sent me to school a bit more,' I says—'an' then I could ha' read i' the books like fun, an' kep' my head cool an' empty.' Lors, she's fine an' comfor'ble now, my old mother is : she ates her baked meat an' taters as often as she likes. For I'm gettin' so full o' money, I must hev a wife to spend it for me. But it's bothern,' a wife is— Mumps mightn't like her."

"But come now, let's hear more about this business, Tom," said uncle Glegg. "I suppose you want a little sum to make a venture with. But where's all your own money ? You don't spend it all—eh ?"

"No, sir," said Tom colouring ; "but my father is unwilling to risk it, and I don't like to press him. If I could get twenty or thirty pounds to begin with, I could pay five per cent for it, and then I could gradually make a little capital of my own, and do without a loan."

"Ay......ay," said Mr. Glegg, in an approving tone ; "that's not a bad notion, and I won't say as I wouldn't be your man. But it'll be as well for me to see this Salt, as you talk on. And then......here's this friend o' yours offers to buy the goods for you. Perhaps you've got somebody to stand surety for you if the money's put into your hands ?" added the cautious old gentleman, looking over his spectacles at Bob.

"I don't think that's necessary, uncle," said Tom. "At least, I mean it would not be necessary for me, because I know Bob well ; but perhaps it would be right for you to have some security."

"Mr. Glegg, Mr. Glegg," said a severe voice from the open parlour window, "pray are you coming in to tea ?—or are you going to stand talking with packmen till you get murdered in the open daylight ?"

"Murdered ?" said Glegg ; "what's the woman talking of ? Here's your nephey Tom come about a bit o' business."

"Murdered—yes—it isn't many 'sizes ago, since a packman

murdered a young woman in a lone place, and stole her thimble, and threw her body into a ditch."

"Nay, nay," said Mr. Glegg, soothingly, "you're thinking o' the man wi' no legs, as drove a dogcart."

"Well, it's the same thing, Mr. Glegg—only you're fond o' contradicting what I say; and if my nephey's come about business, it 'ud be more fitting if you'd bring him into the house and let his aunt know about it, instead o' whispering in corners in that plotting, undermining way."

"Well, well," said Mr. Glegg, "we'll come in now."

"You needn't stay here," said the lady to Bob, in a loud voice, adapted to the moral not the physical distance between them. "We don't want anything. I don't deal wi' packmen. Mind you shut the gate after you."

"Stop a bit; not so fast," said Mr. Glegg: "I haven't done with this young man yet. Come in, Tom; come in," he added, stepping in at the French window.

"Mr. Glegg," said Mrs. G., in a fatal tone, "if you're going to let that man and his dog in on my carpet, before my very face, be so good as to let me know. A wife's got a right to ask that, I hope".

"Don't you be uneasy, mum," said Bob, touching his cap. He saw at once that Mrs. Glegg was a bit of game worth running down, and longed to be at the sport: "we'll stay out upo' the gravel here—Mumps and me will. Mumps knows his company—he does. I might hish at him by th' hour together, before he'd fly at a real gentlewoman like you. It's wonderful how he knows which is the good-looking ladies—and's partic'lar fond of 'em when they've good shapes. Lors!" added Bob, laying down his pack on the gravel, "it's a thousand pities such a lady as you shouldn't deal with a packman, i'stead o' going into these new-fangled shops, where there's half-a-dozen fine gents wi' their chins propped up wi' a stiff stock, a-looking like bottles wi' ornamental stoppers, an' all got to get their dinner out of a bit o' calico: it stan's to reason you must pay three times the price you pay a packman as is the nat'ral way o' gettin' goods—an' pays no rent, an' isn't forced to throttle himself till the lies are

squeezed out on him, whether he will or no. But lors! mum, you know what it is better nor I do—*you* can see through them shopmen, I'll be bound."

"Yes, I reckon I can, and through the packmen too," observed Mrs. Glegg, intending to imply that Bob's flattery had produced no effect on *her*.

"Look you there now!" said Bob. "Didn't I know as you'd remember the best bargains you've made in your life was made wi' packmen? Why, mum, look at the printed cottons now, an' what they was when you wore 'em—why, you wouldn't put such a thing on now, I can see. It must be first-rate quality—the manifactur as you'd buy—summat as 'ud wear as well as your own faitures."

"Yes, better quality nor any you're like to carry: you've got nothing first-rate but brazenness, I'll be bound," said Mrs. Glegg, with a triumphant sense of her insurmountable sagacity. "Mr. Glegg, are you going ever to sit down to your tea? Tom, there's a cup for you."

"You speak true there, mum," said Bob. "My pack isn't for ladies like you. The time's gone by for that. Bargains picked up dirt cheap! A bit o' damage here an' there, as can be cut out, or else niver seen i' the wearin'; but not fit to offer to rich folks as can pay for the look o' things as nobody sees. I'm not the man as 'ud offer t' open my pack to *you*, mum: no, no; I'm a imperent chap, as you say—these times makes folks imperent—but I'm not up to the mark o' that."

"Why, what goods do you carry in your pack?" said Mrs. Glegg. "Fine-coloured things, I suppose—shawls an' that?"

"All sorts, mum, all sorts," said Bob, thumping his bundle; "but let us say no more about that, if *you* please. I'm here upo' Mr. Tom's business, an' I'm not the man to take up the time wi' my own."

"And pray, what *is* this business as is to be kept from me?" said Mrs. Glegg, who, solicited by a double curiosity, was obliged to let the one-half wait.

"A little plan o' nephey Tom's here," said good-natured Mr. Glegg; "and not altogether a bad un, I think. A little

plan for making money : that's the right sort o' plan for young folks as have got their fortin' to make, eh, Jane ?"

"But I hope it isn't a plan where he expects iverything to be done for him by his friends : that's what the young folks think of mostly nowadays. And pray, what has this packman got to do wi' what goes on in our family ? Can't you speak for yourself, Tom, and let your aunt know things a nephey should ?"

"This is Bob Jakin, aunt," said Tom, bridling the irritation that aunt Glegg's voice always produced. "I've known him ever since we were little boys."

"What do you say, Mrs. G. ?" said Mr. Glegg, "I've a notion, when I've made a bit more inquiry, as I shall perhaps start Tom here with a bit of a nest-egg—he'll pay me int'rest, you know—an' if you've got some little sums lyin' idle twisted up in a stockin' toe, or that......"

"Mr. Glegg, it's beyond iverything! You'll go and give information to the tramps next, as they may come and rob me."

"Well, well, as I was saying, if you like to join me wi' twenty pounds, you can—I'll make it fifty. That'll be a pretty good nest-egg—eh, Tom ?"

"You're not counting on me Mr. Glegg, I hope," said his wife. "You could do fine things wi' my money, I don't doubt."

"Very well," said Mr. Glegg, rather snappishly, "then we'll do without you. I shall go with you to see this Salt," he added, turning to Bob.

"And now, I suppose, you'll go all the other way, Mr. Glegg," said Mrs. G., "and want to shut me out o' my own nephey's business. I never said I wouldn't put money into it—I don't say as it shall be twenty pounds, though you're so ready to say it for me—but he'll see some day as his aunt's in the right not to risk the money she's saved for him till it's proved as it won't be lost."

But Bob stemmed the injured lady's outburst.

"Ay, mum," he said admiringly, "you know what's what—you do. An' it's nothing but fair. There's this bundle, now" (thumping it lustily), "any other chap 'ud make a pretty penny out on it. But me !......lors, I shall sell 'em for pretty near what I paid for 'em."

"Have you got a bit of good net, now ?" said Mrs. Glegg, in a patronising tone, moving from the tea-table, and folding her napkin.

"Eh, mum, not what you'd think it worth your while to look at. I'd scorn to show it you. It 'ud be an insult to you."

"But let me see," said Mr. Glegg, still patronising, "if they're damaged goods, they're like enough to be a bit the better quality."

"Eh, mum, I'm loth—that I am," said Bob, slowly depositing his pack on the step, and beginning to untie it with unwilling fingers. "But what you order shall be done" (much fumbling in pauses between the sentences). "It's not as you'll buy a single thing on me.........I'd be sorry for you to do it........for think o' them poor women up i' the villages there, as niver stir a hundred yards from home......it 'ud be a pity for anybody to buy up their bargains. Lors, it's as good as a junketing to 'em when they see me wi' my pack........an' I shall niver pick up such bargains for 'em again. Least ways, I've no time now, for I'm off to Laceham. See here, now," Bob went on, becoming rapid again, and holding up a scarlet woollen kerchief with an embroidered wreath in the corner ; "here's a thing to make a lass's mouth water, an' on'y two shillin'—an' why ? Why, 'cause there's a bit of a moth-hole i' this plain end. Lors, I think the moths an' the mildew was sent by Providence o' purpose to cheapen the goods a bit for the good-lookin' women as han't got much money.

Bob held it at a distance for admiration, but Mrs. Glegg said sharply—

"Yes, but nobody wants a fire this time o' year. Put these coloured things by—let me look at your nets, if you've got 'em."

"Eh, mum, I told you how it 'ud be," said Bob, flinging aside the coloured things with an air of desperation. "I knowed it 'ud turn again' you to look at such paltry articles as I carry. Here's a piece o' figured muslin now—what's the use o' your lookin' at it? You might as well look at poor folks's victual, mum—it 'ud on'y take away your appetite."

"Bring me that muslin," said Mrs. Glegg: "it's a buff—I'm partial to buff."

"Eh, but a *damaged* thing," said Bob in a tone of deprecating disgust. "You'd do nothing with it, mum—you'd give it to the cook, I know you would—an' it 'ud be a pity—she'd look too much like a lady in it—it's unbecoming for servants."

"Fetch it and let me see you measure it," said Mrs. Glegg, authoritatively.

Bob obeyed with ostentatious reluctance.

"See what there is over measure!" he said, holding forth the extra half-yard, while Mrs. Glegg was busy examining the damaged yard, and throwing her head back to see how far the fault would be lost on a distant view.

"I'll give you six shilling for it," she said, throwing it down with the air of a person who mentions an ultimatum.

"Didn't I tell you now, mum, as it 'ud hurt your feelings to look at my pack? That damaged bit's turned your stomach now—I see it has," said Bob, wrapping the muslin up with the utmost quickness, and apparently about to fasten up his pack.

"Well, seven shilling," said Mrs. Glegg.

"Put it out o' your mind, mum, now do," said Bob, "Here's a bit o' net, then, for you to look at before I tie up my pack: just for you to see what my trade's come to: spotted and sprigged, you see, beautiful, but yallow—'s been lyin' by an' got the wrong colour. I could niver ha' bought such net, if it hadn't been yallow. Lors, it's took me a deal o' study to know the vally o' such articles; when I began to carry a pack, I was as ignirant as a pig—net or calico was all the same to me. I thought them things the most vally as was the thickest. I was took in dreadful—for I'm a straitforrard chap

—up to no tricks, mum. I can on'y say my nose is my own, for if I went beyond, I should lose myself pretty quick. An' I gev five-an'-eightpence for that piece o' net—if I was to tell y' anything else I should be tellin' you fibs : an' five-an'-eightpence I shall ask for it—not a penny more—for it's a woman's article, an' I like to 'commodate the women. Five-an'-eightpence for six yards—as cheap as if it was only the dirt on it as was paid for."

"I don't mind having three yards of it," said Mrs. Glegg.

"Why, there's but six altogether," said Bob. "No, mum, it isn't worth your while ; you can go to the shop to-morrow an' get the same pattern ready whitened. It's on'y three times the money—what's that to a lady like you ?" He gave an emphatic tie to his bundle.

"Come, lay me out that muslin," said Mrs. Glegg. "Here's eight shilling for it."

"You *will* be jokin', mum," said Bob, looking up with a laughing face, "I see'd you was a pleasant lady when I fust come to the winder."

"Well, put it me out," said Mrs. Glegg, peremptorily.

"But if I let you have it for ten shillin', mum, you'll be so good as not tell nobody. I should be a laughin'-stock—the trade 'ud hoot me, if they knowed it. I'm obliged to make believe as I ask more nor I do for my goods, else they'd find out I was a flat. I'm glad you don't insist upo' buyin' the net, for then I should ha' lost my two best bargains for Mrs. Pepper o' Fibb's End—an' she's a rare customer."

"Let me look at the net again," said Mrs. Glegg. yearning after the cheap spots and sprigs, now they were vanishing.

"Well, I can't deny *you*, mum," said Bob, handing it out. "Eh ! see what a pattern now ! Real Laceham goods."

"Here's fifteen shilling, then, for the two," said Mrs. Glegg. "But it's a shameful price."

"Nay, mum, you'll niver say that when you're upo' your knees i' church i' five years' time. I'm makin' you a present o' th' articles—I am, indeed. That eightpence shaves off my

profit as clean as a razor. Now then, sir," continued Bob, shouldering his pack, "if you please, I'll be glad to go and see about makin' Mr. Tom's fortin'. Eh, I wish I'd got another twenty pound to lay for *my*seen: I shouldn't stay to say my Catechism afore I know'd what to do wi't."

Salt—that eminently "briny chap"—having been discovered in a cloud of tobacco smoke at the Anchor Tavern, Mr. Glegg commenced inquiries which turned out satisfactorily enough to warrant the advance of the "nest-egg", to which aunt Glegg contributed twenty pounds; and in this modest beginning you see the ground of a fact which might otherwise surprise you, namely, Tom's accumulation of a fund, unknown to his father, that promised in no very long time to meet the more tardy process of saving, and quite cover the deficit.

Chapter 3

THE WAVERING BALANCE

I said that Maggie went home that evening from the Red Deeps with a mental conflict already begun. You have seen clearly enough, in her interview with Philip, what that conflict was.

It was so blameless, so good a thing that there should be friendship between her and Philip: the motives that forbade it were so unreasonable—so unchristian! But the severe monotonous warning came again and again—that she was losing the simplicity and clearness of her life by admitting a ground of concealment.

She thought she had won strength to obey the warning before she allowed herself the next week to turn her steps in the evening to the Red Deeps.

She looked firm as well as sad.

"Philip, I have made up my mind—it is right that we should give each other up, in everything but memory. I could not see you without concealment—stay, I know what you are going to say—it is other people's wrong feelings that make concealment necessary; but concealment is bad, however it

may be caused. I feel that it would be bad for me, for us both. And then, if our secret were discovered, there would be nothing but misery—dreadful anger; and then we must part after all, and it would be harder, when we were used to seeing each other."

Philip's face had flushed, and there was a momentary eagerness of expression, as if he had been about to resist this decision with all his might. But he controlled himself, and said with assumed calmness, "Well, Maggie, if we must part, let us try and forget it for one half-hour: let us talk together a little while—for the last time."

"I've begun my picture of you among the Scotch firs, Maggie," said Philip, "so you must let me study your face a little, while you stay—since I am not to see it again. Please, turn your head this way."

"You seem to think more of painting than of anything now, Philip?"

"Perhaps I do," said Philip, rather sadly; "but I think of too many things—sow all sorts of seeds, and get no great harvest from any one of them. I'm cursed with susceptibility in every direction, and effective faculty in none. I care for painting and music; I care for classic literature, and mediaeval literature and modern literature. I flutter all ways, and fly in none."

"I understand what you mean," she said, "though I know so much less than you do. But, dear Philip, I think we are only like children, that someone who is wiser is taking care of. Is it not right to resign ourselves entirely, whatever may be denied us? I have found great peace in that for the last two or three years—even joy in subduing my own will."

"Yes, Maggie," said Philip, vehemently: "and you are shutting yourself up in a narrow self-delusive fanaticism, which is only a way of escaping pain by starving into dullness all the highest powers of your nature. Joy and peace are not resignation: resignation is the willing endurance of a pain that is not allayed—that you don't expect to be allayed. Stupefaction is not resignation, *you* are not resigned: you are only trying to stupefy yourself."

He took her hand and said gently—

"Don't let us think of such things in this short half-hour, Maggie. Let us only care about being together......We shall be friends in spite of separation........ We shall always think of each other. I shall be glad to live as long as you are alive because I shall think there may always come a time when I can—when you will let me help you in some way."

She moved away, so that he was obliged to rise and follow her.

"Maggie," he said, in a tone of remonstrance, "don't persist in this wilful, senseless privation. It makes me wretched to see you benumbing and cramping your nature in this way. You were so full of life when you were a child: I thought you would be a brilliant woman—all wit and bright imagination. And it flashes out in your face still, until you draw that veil of dull quiescence over it."

Maggie felt unable to speak. She shook her head and walked on in silence, till they came to the end of the Scotch firs, and she put out her hand in sign of parting.

"Do you banish me from this place for ever, then, Maggie? Surely I may come and walk in it sometimes? If I meet you by chance, there is no concealment in that?"

It is the moment when our resolution seems about to become irrevocable—when the fatal iron gates are about to close upon us—that tests our strength. Then, after hours of clear reasoning and firm conviction, we snatch any sophistry that will nullify our long struggles, and bring us the defeat that we love better than victory.

Maggie felt her heart leap at this subterfuge of Philip's, and there passed over her face that almost imperceptible shock which accompanies any relief. He saw it, and they parted in silence.

Chapter 4

ANOTHER LOVE SCENE

Early in the following April, nearly a year after that dubious parting you have just witnessed, you may, if you like, again see Maggie entering the Red Deeps through the group of Scotch firs.

There is a more eager, inquiring look in her eyes, than there was last June, and a smile is hovering about her lips, as if some playful speech were awaiting the right hearer. The hearer was not long in appearing.

"Take back your *Corinne*," said Maggie drawing a book from under her shawl. "You were right in telling me she would do me no good : but you were wrong in thinking I should wish to be like her."

"You agree with me in not liking Corinne, then ?"

"I didn't finish the book," said Maggie. "As soon as I came to the blond-haired young lady reading in the park, I shut it up, and determined to read no further. I foresaw that that light-complexioned girl would win away all the love from Corinne and make her miserable. I'm determined to read no more books where the blond-haired women carry away all the happiness.

"Can you bear to think of me as your lover, Maggie ?" said Philip, seating himself by her and taking her hand, in the elation of a sudden hope. "*Do* you love me ?"

She spoke with hesitation, yet with sweet, simple, girlish tenderness.

"I think I could hardly love anyone better : there is nothing but what I love you for." She paused a little while, and then added, "But it will be better for us not to say any more about it—won't it, dear Philip ? You know we couldn't even be friends, if our friendship were discovered. I have never felt that I was right in giving way about seeing you—though it has been so precious to me in some ways ; and now the fear comes upon me strongly again, that it wlll lead to evil."

She turned her large dark glance upon him with a sad smile.

"Come, Maggie, say one kind word, or else you were better to me at Lorton. You asked me if I should like you to kiss me—don't you remember?—and you promised to kiss me when you met me again. You never kept the promise."

The recollection of that childish time came as a sweet relief to Maggie. It made the present moment less strange to her. She kissed him almost as simply and quietly as she had done when she was twelve years old. Philip's eyes flashed with delight, but his next words were words of discontent.

"You don't seem happy enough, Maggie: you are forcing yourself to say you love me, out of pity."

"No, Philip," said Maggie, shaking her head, in her old childish way; "I'm telling you the truth. It is all new and strange to me; but I don't think I could love anyone better than I love you. I should like always to live with you—to make you happy. I have always been happy when I have been with you. There is only one thing I will not do for your sake: I will never do anything to wound my father. You must never ask that from me."

"No, Maggie: I will ask nothing—I will bear everything—I'll wait another your only for a kiss, if you will only give the first place in your heart."

"No," said Maggie, smiling, "I won't make you wait so long as that." But then, looking serious again, she added, as she rose from her seat—

"But what would your own father say, Philip? O, it is quite impossible we can ever be more than friends—brother and sister in secret, as we have been. Let us give up thinking of everything else."

"No, Maggie, I can't give you—up unless you are deceiving me—unless you really only care for me as if I were your brother. Tell me the truth."

"Indeed I do, Philip. What happiness have I ever had so great as being with you?—since I was a little girl—the days Tom was good to me. And your mind is a sort of world to me:

you can tell me all I want to know. I think I should never be tired of being with you."

"Then my life will be filled with hope, Maggie—and I shall be happier than other men, in spite of all! We *do* belong to each other—for always—whether we are apart or together!"

"Yes, Philip: I should like never to part: I should like to make your life very happy."

"I am waiting for something else—I wonder whether it will come."

Maggie smiled, with glistening tears, and then stopped her tall head to kiss the pale face that was fill of pleading, timid love—like a woman's.

She had a moment of real happiness then—a moment of belief that, if there were sacrifice in this love, it was all the richer and more satisfying.

She turned away and hurried home, feeling that in the hour since she had trodden this road before, a new era had begun for her.

Chapter 5

THE CLOVEN TREE

Tom's suspicions having been aroused by certain remarks of aunt Pullet, he met Maggie alone one afternoon and said, "Now, Maggie, tell me this instant everything that has passed between you and Philip Wakem."

"Does my father know anything?" said Maggie, trembling.

"No," said Tom, indignantly. But he *shall* know, if you attempt to use deceit towards me any further."

"I don't wish to use deceit," said Maggie, flushing into resentment at hearing this word applied to her conduct.

"Tell me the whole truth."

"Perhaps you know it."

"Never mind whether I know it or not. Tell me exactly what has happened, or my father shall know everything."

"I tell it for my father's sake then."

"Yes, it becomes you to profess affection for your father, when you have despised his strongest feelings."

"You never do wrong, Tom," said Maggie, tauntingly.

"Not if I know it," answered Tom, with proud sincerity. "But I have nothing to say to you, beyond this : tell me what has passed between you and Philip Wakem. When did you first meet him in the Red Deeps ?"

"A year ago," said Maggie, quietly. "You need ask me no more questions. We have been friendly a year. We have met and walked together often. He has lent me books."

"Is that all ?" said Tom, looking straight at her with his frown.

Maggie paused a moment ; then, determined to make an end of Tom's right to accuse her of deceit, she said, haughtily—

"No, not quite all. On Saturday he told me that he loved me. I didn't think of it before then—I had only thought of him as an old friend."

"And you *encouraged* him ?" said Tom, with an expression of disguest.

"I told him that I loved him too."

Tom was silent a few moments, looking on the ground and frowning, with his hands in his pockets. At last, he looked up, and said, coldly—

"Now, then, Maggie, there are but two courses for you to take ; either you vow solemnly to me, with your hand on my father's Bible, that you will never have another meeting or speak another word in private with Philip Wakem, or you refuse, and I tell my father everything ; and this month, when by my exertions he might be made happy once more, you will cause him the blow of knowing that you are a disobedient, deceitful daughter, who throws away her own respectability by clandestine meetings with the son of a man that has helped to ruin her father. Choose !" Tom ended with cold decision,

going up to the large Bible, drawing it forward, and opening it at the fly-leaf, where the writing was.

It was a crushing alternative to Maggie.

"Tom," she said, urged out of pride into pleading, "don't ask me that. I will promise you to give up all intercourse with Philip, if you will let me see him once, or even only write to him and explain everything—to give it up as long as it would ever cause any pain to my father......I feel something for Philip too. *He* is not happy."

"I don't wish to hear anything for your feelings; I have said exactly what I mean: choose—and quickly, lest my mother should come in."

"If I give you my word, that will be as strong a bond to me as if I laid my hand on the Bible. I don't require that to bind me."

"Do what *I* require," said Tom. "I can't trust you, Maggie. There is no consistency in you. Put your hand on this Bible, and say, 'I renounce all private speech and intercourse with Philip Wakem from this time forth.' Else you will bring shame on us all, and grief on my father; and what is the use of my exerting myself and giving up everything else for the sake of paying father's debts, if you are to bring madness and vexation on him, just when he might be easy and hold up his head once more?"

"Tom," she said, in a low voice, "it was wrong of me—but I was so lonely—and I was sorry for Philip. And I think enmity and hatred are wicked."

"Nonsense!" said Tom. "Your duty was clear enough. Say no more; but promise, in the words I told you."

"I *must* speak to Philip once more."

"You will go with me now and speak to him."

"I give you my word not to meet him or write to him again without your knowledge. That is the only thing I will say. I will put my hand on the Bible if you like."

"Say it, then."

Maggie laid her hand on the page of manuscript and repeated the promise. Tom closed the book, and said "Now, let us go."

Not a word was spoken as they walked along. Maggie was suffering in anticipation of what Philip was about to suffer, and dreading the galling words that would fall on him from Tom's lips; but she felt it was in vain to attempt anything but submission.

Another turning, and they came so close upon him that both Tom and Philip stopped suddenly within a yard of each other. There was a moment's silence, in which Philip darted a look of inquiry at Maggie's face.

"Do you call this acting the part of a man and a gentleman sir?" Tom said, in a voice of harsh scorn, as soon as Philip's eyes were turned on him again.

"What do you mean?" answered Philip, haughtily.

"Mean? Stand farther from me, lest I should lay hands on you, and I'll tell you what I mean. I mean, taking advantage of a young girl's foolishness and ignorance to get her to have secret meetings with you. I mean, daring to trifle with the respectability of a family that has a good and honest name to support."

"I deny that," interrupted Philip, impetuously. "I could never trifle with anything that affected your sister's happiness. She is dearer to me than she is to you; I honour her more than you can ever honour her; I would give up my life to her."

"Don't talk high-flown nonsense to me, sir! Do you mean to pretend that you didn't know it would be injurious to her to meet you here week after week? Do you pretend you had any right to make professions of love to her, even if you had been a fit husband for her, when neither her father nor your father would ever consent to a marriage between you? And *you*—*you* to try and worm yourself into the affections of a handsome girl who is not eighteen, and has been shut out from the world by her father's misfortunes! That's your crooked notion of honour, is it? I call it base treachery—I call it taking advantage of circumstances to win what's too good for you—what you'd never get by fair means."

"It is manly of you to talk in this way to *me*," said Philip, bitterly, his whole frame shaken by violent emotions. "Giants have an immemorial right to stupidity and insolent abuse. You are incapable even of undertanding what I feel for your sister. I feel so much for her that I could even desire to be at friendship with *you*."

"I should be very sorry to understand your feelings," said Tom, with scorching contempt. "What I wish is that you should understand *me*—that I shall take care of *my* sister, and that if you dare to make the least attempt to come near her, or to write to her, or to keep the slightest hold on her mind, your puny, miserable body, that ought to have put some modesty into your mind, shall not protect you. I'll thrash you —I'll hold you up to public scorn. Who wouldn't laugh at the idea of *your* turning lover to a fine girl?"

"Tom, I will not bear it—I will listen no longer," Maggie burst out in a convulsed voice.

"Stay, Maggie!" said Philip, making a strong effort to speak. Then, looking at Tom, "You have dragged your sister here, I suppose, that she may stand by while you threaten and insult me. These naturally seemed to you the right means to influence me. But you are mistaken. Let your sister speak. If she says she is bound to give me up, I shall abide by her wishes to the slightest word."

"It was for my father's sake, Philip," said Maggie, imploringly. Tom threatens to tell my father—and he couldn't bear it: I have promised, I have vowed solemnly, that we will not have any intercourse without my brother's knowledge."

"It is enough, Maggie. *I* shall not change; but I wishyou to hold yourself entirely free. But trust me—remember that I can never seek for anything but good to what belongs to you."

"Yes," said Tom, exasperated by this attitude of Philip's, 'you can talk of seeking good for her and what belongs to her now: did you seek her good before?"

"I did—at some risk, perhaps. But I wished her to have a friend for life—who would cherish her, who would do her more justice than a coarse and narrow-minded brother, that she has always lavished her affections on."

"Yes, my way of befriending her is different from yours; and I'll tell you what is my way. I'll save her from disobeying and disgracing her father. I'll save her from throwing herself away on you—from making herself a laughing-stock—from being flouted by a man like *your* father, because she's not good enough for his son. You know well enough what sort of justice and cherishing you were preparing for her. I'm not to be imposed upon by fine words: I can see what actions mean. Come away, Maggie.".

He seized Maggie's right wrist as he spoke, and she put out her left hand. Philip clasped it an instant, with one eager look, and then hurried away.

Tom and Maggie walked on in silence for some yards. He was still holding her wrist tightly, as if he were compelling a culprit from the scene of action. At last Maggie, with a violent snatch, drew her hand away, and her pent-up, long-gathered irritation burst into utterance.

"Don't suppose that I think you are right, Tom, or that I bow to your will. I despise the feelings you have shown in speaking to Philip: I detest your insulting unmanly allusions to his deformity. You have been reproaching other people all your life—you have been always sure you yourself are right: it is because you have not a mind large enough to see that there is anything better than your own conduct and your own petty aims."

"Certainly," said Tom, coolly. "I don't see that your conduct is better, or your aims either. If your conduct, and Philip Wakem's conduct, has been right, why are you ashamed of its being known? Answer me that. I know what I have aimed at in my conduct, and I've succeeded: pray, what good has your conduct brought to you or anyone else?"

"I don't want to defend myself," said Maggie, still with vehemence: "I know I've been wrong—often, continually. But yet, sometimes, when I have done wrong, it has been because I have feelings that you would be better for, if you had them. If *you* were in fault ever—if you had done anything very wrong, I should be sorry for the pain it brought you; I should not want punishment to be heaped on you. But you have always enjoyed

punishing me—you have always been hard and cruel to me: even when I was a little girl, and always loved you better than anyone else in the world, you would let me go crying to bed without forgiving me. You have no sense of your own imperfection and your own sins. It is a sin to be hard; it is not fitting for a mortal—for a Christian. You are nothing but a Pharisee. You thank God for nothing but your own virtues—you think they are great enough to win you everything else. You have not even a vision of feelings by the side of which your shining virtues are mere darkness!"

"Very well—that is your view of things," said Tom, more coldly than ever; "you need say no more to show me what a wide distance there is between us. Let us remember that in future, and be silent."

Chapter 6

THE HARD-WON TRIUMPH

Three weeks later, when Dorlcote Mill was at its prettiest moment in all the year—the great chestnuts in blossom, and the grass all deep and daisied—Tom Tulliver came home to it earlier than usual in the evening.

"Why, what's up now, Tom?" said his father. "You're a bit earlier than usual."

"O, there was nothing more for me to do, so I came away. Well, mother!"

Tom went up to his mother and kissed her, a sign of unusual good-humour with him. Hardly a word or look had passed between him and Maggie in all the three weeks; but his usual incommunicativeness at home prevented this from being noticeable to their parents.

"Father," said Tom, when they had finished tea, "do you know exactly how much money there is in the tin box?"

"Only a hundred and ninety-three pound," said Mr. Tulliver. "You've brought less o' late—but young fellows like to have their own way with their money. Though I didn't do as

I liked before *I* was of age." He spoke with rather timid discontent.

He paused, and then added,

"There's more nor three hundred wanting—it'll be a fine while before *I* can save that. Losing that forty-two pound wi' the corn was a sore job. This world's been too many for me. It's took four year to lay *this* by—it's mnch if I'm above ground for another four year......I must trusten to you to pay 'em," he went on with a trembling voice, "if you keep i' the same mind now you're coming o' age......But you're like enough to bury me first."

He looked up in Tom's face with a querulous desire for some assurance.

"No, father," said Tom, speaking with energetic decision, though there was tremor discernible in his voice too, "you will live to see the debts all paid. You shall pay them with your own hand."

Tom was silent a little while before he went on.

"A good while ago, my uncle Glegg lent me a little money to trade with, and that has answered. I have three hundred and twenty pounds in the bank."

His mother's arms were round his neck as soon as the last words were uttered, and she said, half-crying—

"O, my boy, I know you'd make iverything right again, when you got a man."

But his father was silent: the flood of emotion hemmed in all power of speech. Both Tom and Maggie were struck with fear lest the shock of joy might even be fatal. But the blessed relief of tears came. The broad chest heaved, the muscles of the face gave way, and the grey-haired man burst into loud sobs. The fit of weeping gradually subsided, and he sat quiet recovering the regularity of his breathing. At last he looked up at his wife and said, in a gentle tone—

"Bessy, you must come and kiss me now—the lad has made you amends. You'll see a bit o' comfort again belike."

When she had kissed him, and he had held her hand a minute, his thoughts went back to the money.

"I wish you'd brought me the money to look at, Tom," he said fingering the sovereigns on the table ; "I should ha' felt surer."

"You shall see it to-morrow, father," said Tom. "My uncle Deane has appointed the creditors to meet to-morrow at the Golden Lion, and he has ordered a dinner for them at two o'clock. My uncle Glegg and he will both be there. It was advertised in the *Messenger* on Saturday.

"Shake hands wi' me, my lad," he said, suddenly putting out his hand. "It's a great thing when a man can be proud as he's got a good son. I've had *that* luck."

Chapter 7

A DAY OF RECKONING

The next day, Mr. Tulliver sat at table with his creditors, his eyes kindling and his cheek flushed with the consciousness that he was about to make an honourable figure once more ; he looked more like the proud, confident, warm-hearted and warm-tempered Tulliver of old times, than might have seemed possible to anyone who had met him a week before. He made his speech asserting his honest principles with his old confident eagerness, alluding to the rascals and the luck that had been against him, but that he had triumphed over, to some extent, by hard efforts and the aid of a good son ; and winding up with the story of how Tom had got the best part of the needful money. But the streak of irritation and hostile triumph seemed to melt for a little while into purer fatherly pride and pleasure, when, Tom's health having been proposed, and uncle Deane, having taken occasion to say a few words of eulogy on his general character and conduct, Tom himself got up and made the single speech of his life. It could hardly have been briefer : he thanked the gentlemen for the honour they had done him. He was glad that he had been able to help his father in proving his integrity and regaining his honest name ; and, for his own part, he hoped he should never undo that work and disgrace that name.

The party broke up in very sober fashion at five o'clock. Tom remained in St. Ogg's to attend to some business, and Mr. Tulliver mounted his horse to go home, and describe the memorable things that had been said and done, to "poor Bessy and the little wench."

As Mr. Tulliver approached the yard-gates of Dorlcote Mill, he saw a well-known figure coming out of them on a fine black horse. They met about fifty yards from the gates, between the great chestnuts and elms and the high bank.

"Tulliver," said Wakem, abruptly, "what a fool's trick you did—spreading those hard lumps on that Far Close. I told you how it would be; but you men never learn to farm with any method."

"Oh!" said Tulliver, suddenly boiling up. "Get somebody else to farm for you, then, as 'll ask *you* to teach him."

"You have been drinking, I suppose," said Wakem.

"No, I've not been drinking," said Tulliver; "I want no drinking to help me make up my mind as I'll serve no longer under a scoundrel."

"Very well you may leave my premises,, to-morrow, then: hold your insolent tongue and let me pass."

"No, I *shan't* let you pass," said Tulliver, getting fiercer. "I shall tell you what I think of you first. You're too big a raskill to get hanged—you're......"

"Let me pass, you ignorant brute, or I'll ride over you."

Mr. Tulliver, spurring his horse and raising his whip, made a rush forward, and Wakem's horse, rearing and staggering backward, threw his rider from the saddle and sent him sideways on the ground. Wakem had had the presence of mind to loose the bridle, at once, and as the horse only staggered a few paces and then stood still, he might have risen and remounted without more inconvenience than a bruise and a shake. But before he could rise, Tulliver was off his horse too. He rushed on Wakem, who was in the act of trying to recover his feet, grasped him by the left arm so as to press Wakem's whole weight on the right arm, which rested on the ground and flogged him fiercely across the back with his riding whip. Wakem

shouted for help, but no help came, until a woman's scream was heard, and the cry of "Father, father!"

Suddenly, Wakem felt, something had arrested Mr. Tulliver's arm; for the flogging ceased, and the grasp on his own arm was relaxed.

"Get away with you—go!" said Tulliver, angrily. But it was not to Wakem that he spoke. Slowly the lawyer rose, and, as he turned his head, saw that Tulliver's arms were being held by a girl—rather by the fear of hurting the girl that clung to him with all her young might.

"O Luke—mother—come and help Mr. Wakem!" Maggie cried, as she heard the longed-for footsteps:

"Help me on to that low horse," said Wakem to Luke, "then I shall perhaps manage: though—confound it—I think this arm is sprained."

With some difficulty, Wakem was heaved on to Tulliver's horse. Then he turned towards the miller and said, with white rage, "You'll suffer for this, sir. Your daughter is a witness that you've assaulted me."

"I don't care," said Mr. Tulliver, in a thick, fierce voice; "go and show your back, and tell 'em I thrashed you. Tell 'em I've made things a bit more even i' the world."

"Ride my horse home with me," said Wakem to Luke.

"Father, come in!" said Maggie, imploringly.

"I feel ill—faintish," he said. "Help me in, Bessy—I'm giddy—I've a pain i' the head."

He walked in slowly, propped by his wife and daughter, and tottered into his arm-chair.

"Hadn't we better send for the doctor?" said Mrs. Tulliver. He seemed to be too faint and suffering to hear her; but presently, when she said to Maggie, "Go and see for somebody to fetch the doctor," he looked up at her with full comprehension, and said, "Doctor? no—no doctor. It's my head—that's all. Help me to bed."

Sad ending to the *day* that *had* risen on them all like a

beginning of better times! But mingled seed must bear a mingled crop.

Tom, tired out by his active day, fell asleep soon, and slept soundly; it seemed to him as if he had only just come to bed, when he waked to see his mother standing by him in the grey light of early morning.

"My boy, you must get up this minute: I've sent for the doctor, and your father wants you and Maggie to come to him."

"Is he worse, mother?"

"He's been very ill all night with his head, but he doesn't say it's worse—he only said sudden, 'Bessy, fetch the boy and girl. Tell 'em to make haste.' "

Maggie and Tom threw on their clothes hastily and reached their father's room almost at the same moment. He was watching for them with an expression of pain on his brow.

"Tom, my lad, it's come upon me as I shan't get up again. ......This world's been too many for me, my lad, but you've done what you could to make things a bit even. Shake hands wi' me again, my lad, before I go away from you."

The father and son clasped hands and looked at each other an instant. Then Tom said, trying to speak firmly!

"Have you any wish, father—that I can fulfil when..."

"Ay, my lad...you'll try and get the old mill back."

"Yes, father."

"And there's your mother—you'll try and make her amends, all you can, for my bad luck......and there's the little wench .... You must take care of her, Tom......don't you fret, my wench...there'll come somebody as'll love you and take your part...and you must be good to her, my lad. I was good to *my* sister. Kiss me, Maggie.. Come, Bessy...You'll manage to pay for a brick grave, Tom, so as your mother and me can lie together."

His hands moved uneasily, as if he wanted them to remove some obstruction that weighed upon him. Two or three times there fell from him some broken words—

"This world's...too many...honest man...puzzling...".

Soon they merged into mere mutterings; the eyes had ceased to discern; and then came the final silence.

Tom and Maggie went down-stairs together into the room where their father's place was empty. Their eyes turned to the same spot, and Maggie spoke: "Tom, forgive me—let us always love each other," and they clung and wept together.

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BOOK SIXTH

THE GREAT TEMPTATION

Chapter I

A DUET IN PARADISE

The well-furnished drawing-room, with the open grand piano, and the pleasant outlook down a sloping garden to a boat-house by the side of the Floss, is Mr. Deane's. The neat little lady in mourning, whose light-brown ringlets are falling over the coloured embroidery with which her fingers are busy, is of course Lucy Deane; and the fine young man who is leaning down from his chair to snap the scissors in the extremely abbreviated face of the "King Charles" lying on the young lady's feet, is no other than Mr. Stephen Guest, whose diamond ring, attar of roses, and air of nonchalant leisure, at twelve o'clock in the day, are the graceful and odoriferous result of the largest oil-mill and the most extensive wharf in St. Ogg's.

"By the bye!" said Lucy, pausing in her work, "it has just occurred to me that I have never found out whether my cousin Maggie will object to see Philip, as her brother does. Tom will not enter a room where Philip is, if he knows it: perhaps Maggie may be the same, and then we shan't be able to sing our glees—shall we?"

"What! is your cousin coming to stay with you?" said Stephen, with a look of slight annoyance.

"Yes. She's going to leave her situation, where she has been nearly two years, poor thing—ever since her father's death; and she will stay with me a month or two—many months, I hope."

"And am I bound to be pleased at that news?"

"O no, not at all," said Lucy, with a little air of pique. "I am pleased, but that, of course, is no reason why *you* should be pleased. There is no girl in the world I love so well as my cousin Maggie."

"Very sweet and angelic of you," said Stephen, looking at her with an admiring smile; "and all the more so if she has the conversational qualities of her mother."

"Poor aunty! You are cruel to ridicule her. She is very valuable to *me*, I know. She manages the house beautifully—much better than any stranger would—and she was a great comfort to me in mamma's illness."

"Yes, but in point of companionship, one would prefer that she should be represented by her brandy-cherries and cream-cakes. I think with a shudder that her daughter will always be present in person, and have no agreeable proxies of that kind—a fat, blonde girl, with round blue eyes, who will stare at us silently."

"O, yes!" exclaimed Lucy, laughing wickedly and clapping her hands, "that is just my cousin Maggie. You must have seen her!"

"No, indeed: I'm only guessing what Mrs. Tulliver's daughter must be; and then, if she is to banish Philip, our only apology for a tenor, that will be an additional bore."

Was not Stephen Guest right in his decided opinion that this slim maiden of eighteen was quite the sort of wife a man would not be likely to repent of marrying?—a woman who was loving and thoughtful for other women, not giving them Judas-kisses with eyes askance on their welcome defects, but with real care and vision for their half-hidden pains and mortifications, with long ruminating enjoyment of little pleasures prepared for them? Perhaps the emphasis of this admiration did not fall precisely on this rarest quality in her—perhaps he approved his own choice of her chiefly because she did not strike him as a remarkable rarity. A man likes his wife to be pretty: well, Lucy was pretty, but not to a maddening extent. A man likes his wife to be accomplished, gentle, affectionate, and not stupid; and Lucy had all these qualifications. Stephen was not surprised to find himself in love with her and was conscious of

excellent judgment in preferring her to Miss Leyburn, the daughter of the county member, although Lucy was only the daughter of his father's subordinate partner : besides he had had to defy and overcome a slight unwillingness and disappointment in his father and sister—a circumstance which gives a young man an agreeable consciousness of his own dignity. Stephen was aware that he had sense and independence enough to choose the wife who was likely to make him happy, unbiassed by any indirect considerations. He meant to choose Lucy : she was a little darling, and exactly the sort of woman he had always most admired.

Chapter 2

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

"He is very clever, Maggie," said Lucy. She was kneeling on a footstool at Maggie's feet, after placing that dark lady in the large crimson velvet chair. "I feel sure you will like him. I hope you will."

"I shall be very difficult to please," said Maggie smiling and holding up one of Lucy's long curls, that the sunlight might shine through it. "A gentleman who thinks he is good enough for Lucy must expect to be sharply criticised."

"Indeed, he's a great deal too good for me. And sometimes, when he is away, I almost think it can't really be that he loves me. But I can never doubt it when he is with me—though I couldn't bear anyone but you to know that I feel in that way, Maggie."

"Oh, then, if I disapprove of him, you can give him up, since you are not engaged," said Maggie, with playful gravity.

"I would rather not be engaged. When people are engaged, they begin to think of being married soon," said Lucy too thoroughly preoccupied to notice Maggie's joke.

"There is one pleasure, I know, Maggie, that your deepest dismalness will never resist," said Lucy. "That is music, and I mean you to have quite a riotous feast of it. I mean you to get up your playing again, which used to be so much better than mine, when we were at Laceham.'

"You would have laughed to see me playing the little girls' tunes over and over to them, when I took them to practice," said Maggie, "just for the sake of fingering the dear keys again. But I don't know whether I could play anything more difficult now than 'Begone, dull care !' "

"I know what a wild state of joy you used to be in when the glee-men came round," said Lucy, taking up her embroidery, "and we might have all those old glees that you used to love so, if I were certain that you don't feel exactly as Tom does about some things.' "

"I should have thought there was nothing you might be more certain of," said Maggie, smiling.

"I ought rather to have said, one particular thing. Because if you feel just as he does about that we shall want our third voice. St. Ogg's is so miserably provided with musical gentlemen. There are really only Stephen and Philip Wakem who have any knowledge of music, so as to be able to sing a part."

Lucy had looked up from her work as she uttered the last sentence, and saw that there was a change in Maggie's face.

"Does it hurt you to hear the name mentioned, Maggie ? If it does, I will not speak of him again. I know Tom will not see him if he can avoid it."

"I don't feel at all as Tom does on that subject," said Maggie, rising and going to the window as if she wanted to see more of the landscape "I've always liked Philip Wakem ever since I was a little girl, and saw him at Lorton. He was so good when Tom hurt his foot."

"O, I'm so glad !" said Lucy. "Then you won't mind his coming sometimes, and we can have much more music than we could without him. I'm very fond of poor Philip, only I wish he were not so morbid about his deformity. I suppose it is his deformity that makes him so sad—and sometimes bitter. It is certainly very piteous to see his poor little crooked body and pale face among great strong people."

"But Lucy," said Maggie, trying to arrest the prattling stream......

"Ah, there is the door bell. That must be Stephen." Lucy went on, not noticing Maggie's faint effort to speak. "One of the things I most admire in Stephen is, that he makes a greater friend of Philip than anyone."

It was too late for Maggie to speak now: the drawing-room door was opening, and Minny was already growling in a small way at the entrance of a tall gentleman, who went up to Lucy and took her hand with a half-polite, half-tender glance and tone of inquiry, which seemed to indicate that he was unconscious of any other presence.

"Let me introduce you to my cousin, Miss Tulliver," said Lucy, turning with wicked enjoyment towards Maggie, who now approached from the further window. "This is Mr. Stephen Guest."

For one instant Stephen could not conceal his astonishment at the sight of this tall dark-eyed nymph with her jet-black coronet of hair; the next, Maggie felt herself, for the first time in her life, receiving the tribute of a very deep blush and a very deep bow from a person towards whom she herself was conscious of timidity. This new experience was very agreeable to her—so agreeable, that it almost effaced her previous emotion about Philip. There was new brightness in her eyes, and a very becoming flush on her cheek, as she seated herself.

"I hope you perceive what a striking likeness you drew the day before yesterday," said Lucy, with a pretty laugh of triumph. She enjoyed her lover's confusion—the advantage was usually on his side.

"This designing cousin of yours quite deceived me, Miss Tulliver" said Stephen, seating himself by Lucy, and stooping to play with Minny—only looking at Maggie furtively. "She said you had light hair and blue eyes."

"Nay, it was you who said so," remonstrated Lucy. "I only refrained from destroying your confidence in your own second-sight."

"I wish I could always err in the same way," said Stephen, "and find reality so much more beautiful than my preconceptions."

"Now you have proved yourself equal to the occasion," said Maggie, "and said what it was incumbent on you to say under the circumstances."

After some more conversation, Stephen asked Maggie if she had read Buckland's Treatise.

"No, no," Lucy interposed. "I must forbid your plunging Maggie in books. I shall never get her away from them; and I want her to have delicious do-nothing days, filled with boating, and chatting, and riding, and driving: that is the holiday she needs."

"Apropos!" said Stephen, looking at his watch. "Shall we go out for a row on the river now? The tide will suit for us to go to the Tofton way, and we can walk back."

That was a delightful proposition to Maggie, for it was years since she had been on the river. When she was gone to put on her bonnet, Lucy lingered to give an order to the servant, and took the opportunity of telling Stephen that Maggie had no objection to seeing Philip.

"I'll call and beat him up to-morrow," said Stephen, "and bring him with me in the evening, shall I? My sisters will want to call on you when I tell them your cousin is with you. I must leave the field clear for them in the morning."

"O yes, pray bring him," said Lucy. "And you *will* like Maggie, shan't you?" she added in a beseeching tone. "Isn't she a dear, noble-looking creature?"

"Too tall," said Stephen, smiling down upon her, "and a little too fiery. She is not my type of woman, you know".

Gentlemen, you are aware, are apt to impart these imprudent confidences to ladies concerning their unfavourable opinion of sister fair ones. That is why so many women have the advantage of knowing that they are secretly repulsive to men who have self-denyingly made ardent love to them. And hardly anything could be more distinctively characteristic of Lucy, than that she both implicity believed what Stephen said,

and was determined that Maggie should not know it. But you, who have a higher logic than the verbal to guide you, have already foreseen, as the direct sequence to that unfavourable opinion of Stephen's, that he walked down to the boat-house calculating by the aid of a vivid imagination, that Maggie must give him her hand at least twice in consequence of this pleasant boating plan, and that a gentleman who wishes ladies to look at him is advantageously situated when he is rowing them in a boat. What then? Had he fallen in love with this surprising daughter of Mrs. Tulliver at first sight? Certainly not. Such passions are never heard of in real life. Besides, he was in love already, and half-engaged to the dearest little creature in the world; and he was not a man to make a fool of himself in any way. But when one is five-and-twenty, one has not chalk-stones at one's finger-ends that the touch of a handsome girl should be entirely indifferent. It was perfectly natural and safe to admire beauty and enjoy looking at it—at least under such circumstances as the present. And there was really something very interesting about this girl, with her poverty and troubles: it was gratifying to see the friendship between the two cousins. Generally, Stephen admitted, he was not fond of women who had any peculiarity of character—but here the peculiarity seemed really of a superior kind; and provided one is not obliged to marry such women, why, they certainly make a variety in social intercourse.

Maggie did not fulfil Stephen's hope by looking at him during the first quarter of an hour: her eyes were too full of the old banks that she knew so well. She felt lonely, cut off from Philip—the only person who had ever seemed to love her devotedly, as she had always longed to be loved. But presently the rhymthmic movement of the oars attracted her, and she thought she should like to learn how to row. This roused her from her reverie, and she asked if she might take an oar. It appeared that she required much teaching, and she became ambitious. The exercise brought the warm blood into her cheeks, and made her inclined to take her lesson merrily.

"I shall not be satisfied until I can manage both oars, and row you and Lucy," she said, looking very bright as she stepped

out of the boat. Maggie, we know, was apt to forget the thing she was doing, and she had chosen an inopportune moment for her remark : her foot slipped, but happily Mr. Stephen Guest held her hand, and kept her up with a firm grasp.

"You have not hurt yourself at all, I hope ?" he said, bending to look in her face with anxiety. It was very charming to be taken care of in that kind graceful manner by some one taller and stronger than one's self. Maggie had never felt just in the same way before.

When they reached home again, they found uncle and aunt Pullet seated with Mrs. Tulliver in the drawing-room, and Stephen hurried away, asking leave to come again in the evening.

Chapter 3

CONFIDENTIAL MOMENTS

When Maggie went up to her bedroom that night, it appeared that she was not at all inclined to undress.

Had anything remarkable happened ?

It was not that she thought distinctly of Mr. Stephen Guest, or dwelt on the indications that he looked her at with admiration ; it was rather that she felt the half-remote presence of a world of love and beauty and delight, made up of vague, mingled images from all the poetry and romance she had ever read, or had ever woven in her dreamy reveries. Her mind glanced back once or twice to the time when she had courted privation, when she had thought all longing, all impatience, was subdued ; but that condition seemed irrecoverably gone, and she recoiled from the remembrance of it. No prayer, no striving now, would bring back that negative peace : the battle of her life, it seemed, was not to be decided in that short and easy way—by perfect renunciation at the very threshold of her youth.

She was in her brighter aerial world again when a little tap came at the door : of course it was her cousin who entered in ample white dressing-gown.

"Why Maggie, you naughty child, haven't you begun to undress?" said Lucy, in astonishment. "I promised not to come and talk to you, because I thought you must be tired. But here you are, looking as if you were ready to dress for a ball. Come, come, get on your dressing-gown, and unplait your hair."

"Well, *you* are not very forward," retorted Maggie, hastily reaching her own pink cotton gown, and looking at Lucy's light-brown hair brushed back in curly disorder.

"Oh, I have not much to do, I shall sit down and talk to you, till I see you are really on the way to bed."

While Maggie stood and unplaited her long black hair over her pink drapery, Lucy sat down near the toilette-table.

"You really *have* enjoyed the music to-night, haven't you, Maggie?"

"O yes, that is what prevents me from feeling sleepy. I think I should have no other mortal wants, if I could always have plenty of music. It seems to infuse strength into my limbs and ideas into my brain. Life seems to go on without effort, when I am filled with music. At other times one is conscious of carrying a weight."

"And Stephen has a splendid voice, hasn't he?"

"Well, perhaps we are neither of us judges of that," said Maggie, laughing, as she seated herself and tossed her long hair back. "You are not impartial, and *I* think any barrel organ splendid."

"But tell me what you think of him, now. Tell me exactly—good and bad too."

"O, I think you should humiliate him a little. A lover should not be so much at ease, and so self-confident. He ought to tremble more."

"Nonsense, Maggie! As if anyone could tremble at me! You think he is conceited—I see that. But you don't dislike him, do you?"

"Dislike him! No. Am I in the habit of seeing such charming people, that I should be very difficult to please?

Besides, how could I dislike anyone that promised to make you happy, you dear thing!" Maggie pinched Lucy's dimpled chin.

"We shall have more music to-morrow evening," said Lucy, looking happy already, "for Stephen will bring Philip Wakem with him."

"O Lucy, I can't see him," said Maggie, turning pale. "At least I could not see him without Tom's leave."

"Is Tom such a tyrant as that?" said Lucy, surprised. "I'll take the responsibility, then—tell him it was my fault."

"But, dear," said Maggie, falteringly, "I promised Tom very solemnly—before my father's death—I promised him I would not speak to Philip without his knowledge and consent. And I have a great dread of opening the subject with Tom—of getting into a quarrel with him again."

"But I never heard of anything so strange and unreasonable. What harm can poor Philip have done? May I speak to Tom about it?"

"O no, pray don't, dear," said Maggie. "I'll go to him myself to-morrow, and tell him that you wish Philip to come. I've thought before of asking him to absolve me from my promise, but I've not had the courage to determine on it."

They were both silent for some moments, and then Lucy said—

"Maggie, you have secrets from me, and I have none from you."

Maggie looked meditatively away from Lucy. Then she turned to her and said, "I *should* like to tell you about Philip. But, Lucy, you must not betray that you know it to anyone—least of all to Philip himself, or to Mr. Stephen Guest."

The narrative lasted long, for Maggie had never before known the relief of such an outpouring: she had never before told Lucy anything of her inmost life: and the sweet face bent towards her with sympathetic interest, and the little hand pressing hers encouraged her to speak on.

"There, Lucy, you have had my story," said Maggie, smiling, with the tears in her eyes. "You see I am like Sir Andrew Aguecheek—*I* was adored once."

"Ah, now I see how it is you know Shakespeare and everything, and have learned so much since you left school, which always seemed to me witchcraft before—part of your general uncanniness," said Lucy.

She mused a little with her eyes downward, and then added, looking at Maggie. "It is very beautiful that you should love Philip: I never thought such a happiness would befall him. And in my opinion, you ought not to give him up. There are obstacles now; but they may be done away with in time."

Chapter 4

BROTHER AND SISTER

Maggie was obliged to go to Tom's lodgings in the middle of the day, when he would be coming in to dinner, else she would not have found him at home. He was not lodging with entire strangers. Our friend Bob Jakin had, with Mumps's tacit consent, taken not only a wife about eight months ago, but also one of those queer old houses pierced with suprising passages, by the water-side, where, as he observed, his wife and mother could keep themselves out of mischief by letting out two "pleasure-boats," in which he had invested some of his savings and by taking in a lodger for the parlour and spare bedroom. Under these circumstances, what could be better for the interests of all parties, sanitary considerations apart, than that the lodger should be Mr. Tom?

It was Bob's wife who opened the door to Maggie.

"Eh, mother, mother—tell Bob!—it's Miss Maggie! Come in, Miss, for goodness do," she went on, opening a side-door.

"How do you do, Bob?" said Maggie, coming forward and putting out her hand to him; "I always meant to pay your wife a visit, and I shall come another day on purpose for that if she will let me. But I was obliged to come to-day, to speak to my brother."

"He'll be in before long Miss. He's doin' finely, Mr. Tom is: he'll be one o' the first men hereabouts—you'll see that."

"Well, Bob, I'm sure he'll be indebted to you, whatever he

becomes: he said so himself only the other night, when he was talking of you."

But Bob had already said, "Here's Mr. Tom," and the outer door was opening.

"There's no time to spare, Tom," said Maggie, as soon as Bob had left the room. "I must tell you at once what I came about, else I shall be hindering you from taking your dinner."

She rose from her seat, and, looking straight at Tom, said—

"I want you to absolve me from my promise about Philip Wakem. Or rather, I promised you not to see him without telling you. I am come to tell you that I wish to see him."

"Very well," said Tom coldly.

"Not for myself, dear Tom. Don't be angry. I shouldn't have asked it, only that Philip, you know, is a friend of Lucy's and she wishes him to come—has invited him to come this evening; and I told her I couldn't see him without telling you. I shall only see him in the presence of other people. There will never be anything secret between us again."

Tom looked away from Maggie, knitting his brow more strongly for a little while. Then he turned to her and said, slowly and emphatically—

"You know what is my feeling on that subject, Maggie. There is no need for my repeating anything I said a year ago. While my father was living, I felt bound to use the utmost power over you, to prevent you from disgracing him as well as yourself, and all of us. But now I must leave you to your own choice. You wish to be independent—you told me so after my father's death. My opinion is not changed. If you think of Philip Wakem as a lover again you must give up me."

"I don't wish it, dear Tom—at least as things are: I see that it would lead to misery. But I shall soon go away to another situation, and I should like to be friends with him again while I am here. Lucy wishes it."

The severity of Tom's face relaxed a little.

"I shouldn't mind your seeing him occasionally at my uncle's—I don't want you to make a fuss on the subject. But I

have no confidence in you, Maggie. You would be led away to do anything.".

That was a cruel word. Maggie's lip began to tremble.

"Why will you say that, Tom? It is very hard of you. Have I not done and borne everything as well as I could? And I have kept my word to you—when—when...... My life has not been a happy one, any more than yours."

He put his hand gently on her arm, and said in the tone of a kind pedagogue—

"Now listen to me, Maggie, I'll tell you what I mean. You're always in extremes—you have no judgment and self-command; and yet you think you know best, and will not submit to be guided. You know I didn't wish you to take a situation. My aunt Pullet was willing to give you a good home, and you might have lived respectably amongst your relations, until I could have provided a home for you with my mother. And that is what I should like to do. I wished my sister to be a lady, and I would always have taken care of you, as my father desired, until you were well married. But your ideas and mine never accord, and you will not give way. Yet you might have sense enough to see that a brother, who goes out into the world and mixes with men, necessarily knows better what is right and respectable for his sister than she can know herself. You think I am not kind; but my kindness can only be directed by what I believe to be good for you."

She looked up at him with a grave, earnest gaze, and said—

"I can't make you think better of me, Tom, by anything I can say. But I am not so shut out from all your feelings as you believe me to be. I see as well as you do, that from our position with regard to Philip's father—not on other grounds—it would be unreasonable—it would be wrong for us to entertain the idea of marriage; and I have given up thinking of him as a lover... I am telling you the truth, and you have no right to disbelieve me: I have kept my word to you, and you have never detected me in a falsehood. I should not only not encourage, I should carefully avoid any intercourse with Philip on any other footing than that of quiet friendship. You may think that I am unable

to keep my resolutions; but at least you ought not to treat me with hard contempt on the ground of faults that I have not committed yet."

"Well, Maggie," said Tom, softening under this appeal, "I don't want to overstrain matters. I think, all things considered, it will be best for you to see Philip Wakem, if Lucy wishes him to come to the house. I believe what you say—at least you believe it yourself I know: I can only warn you. I wish to be as good a brother to you as you will let me."

Chapter 5

SHOWING THAT TOM HAD OPENED THE OYSTER

"And now we've settled this Newcastle business, Tom," said Deane, that same afternoon, as they were seated in the private room at the Bank together, "there's another matter I want to talk to you about. Since you're likely to have rather a smoky, unpleasant time of it at Newcastle for the next few weeks, you'll want a good prospect of some sort to keep up your spirits."

"Let me see—it's going on for seven years now since you applied to me for a situation—eh, Tom?"

"Yes, sir: I'm three-and-twenty now," said Tom.

"Ah—it's as well not to say that, though; for you'd pass for a good deal older, and age tells well in business. I remember your coming very well: I remember I saw there was some pluck in you, and that was what made me give you encouragement. And I'm happy to say, I was right—I'm not often deceived. I was naturally a little shy at pushing my nephew, but I'm happy to say you've done me credit, sir; and if I'd had a son o' my own, I shouldn't have been sorry to see him like you."

Mr. Deane tapped his box and opened it again, repeating in a tone of some feeling—"No, I shouldn't have been sorry to see him like you."

"I'm very glad I've given you satisfaction, sir; I've done my best," said Tom, in his proud, independent way.

"It stands to reason," Mr. Deane went on. "that your being my nephew weighs in your favour; but I don't deny that if you'd been no relation of mine at all, your conduct in that affair of Pelley's bank would have led Mr. Guest and myself to make some acknowledgement of the service you've been to us: and, backed by your general conduct and business ability, it has made us determine on giving you a share in the business—a share which we shall be glad to increase as the years go on.

"I'm very grateful to Mr. Guest and you: sir: of course. I feel the most indebted to *you*, who first took me into the business, and have taken a good deal of pain with me since."

Tom spoke with a slight tremor, and paused after he had said this.

"Yes, yes," said Mr. Deane. "I don't spare pains when I see they'll be of any use. I gave myself some trouble with Gell—else he wouldn't have been what he is."

"But there's one thing I should like to mention to you, uncle. I've never spoken to you of it before. If you remember, at the time my father's property was sold, there was some thought of your firm buying the Mill: I know you thought it would be a very good investment, especially if steam were applied."

"Perhaps it's of no use my mentioning it at present," Tom went on, "but I wish you to know what I have in my mind about the Mill. I've a strong feeling about it. It was my father's dying wish that I should try and get it back again whenever I could: it was in his family for five generations. I promised my father; and besides that I'm attached to the place. I shall never like any other so well. And if it should ever suit your views to buy it for the firm, I should have better chance of fulfilling my father's wish."

"Well, I'll turn it over, Tom. I must inquire into the matter, and go into it with Mr. Guest. I promise you to bear it in mind, and when you come back, we'll talk of it again. I am going to dinner now. Come and breakfast with us to-morrow morning, and say good-bye to your mother and sister before you start."

Chapter 6

ILLUSTRATING THE LAWS OF ATTRACTION

It is evident to you now, that Maggie had arrived at a moment in her life which must be considered by all prudent persons as a great opportunity for a young woman. Launched into the higher society of St. Ogg's, with a striking person which had the advantage of being quite unfamiliar to the majority of beholders, Maggie was certainly at a new starting-point in life.

Maggie began to be less haunted by her sad memories and anticipations. Life was certainly very pleasant just now: it was becoming very pleasant to dress in the evening, and to feel that she was one of the beautiful things of this spring-time. And there were admiring eyes always awaiting her now; she was no longer an unheeded person, liable to be chid, from whom attention was continually claimed, and on whom no one felt bound to confer any. It was pleasant, too, when Stephen and Lucy were gone out riding, to sit down at the piano alone, and find that the old fitness between her fingers and the keys remained, and revived, like a sympathetic kinship not to be worn out by separation.

The tragedy of our lives is not created entirely from within. "Character," says Novalis, in one of his questionable aphorisms —"character is destiny". But not the whole of our destiny. Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, was speculative and irresolute, and we have a great tragedy in consequence. But if his father had lived to a good old age, and his uncle had died an early death, we can conceive Hamlet's having married Ophelia, and got through life with a reputation of sanity notwithstanding many soliloquies, and some moody sarcasms towards the fair daughter of Polonius, to say nothing of the frankest incivility to his father-in-law.

Maggie's destiny, then, is at present hidden, and we must wait for it to reveal itself like the course of an unmapped river: we only know that the river is full and rapid, and that for all rivers there is the same final home. Under the charm of her new pleasures, Maggie herself was ceasing to think, with her eager prefiguring imagination, of her future lot; and her

anxiety about her first interview with Philip was losing its predominance : perhaps, unconsciously to herself, she was not sorrry that the interview had been deferred.

For Philip had not come the evening he was expected, and Mr. Stephen Guest brought word that he was gone to the coast—probably, he thought, on a sketching expedition ; but it was not certain when he would return. It was just like Philip—to go off in that way without telling anyone. It was not until the twelfth day that he returned.

There were not many hours in those ten days in which Mr. Stephen Guest was not seated by Lucy's side, or standing near her at the piano, or accompanying her on some outdoor excursion : his attentions were clearly becoming more assiduous : and that was what everyone had expected. Lucy was very happy ; all the happier because Stephen's society seemed to have become much more interesting and amusing since Maggie had been there. Playful discussions—sometimes serious ones—were going forward, in which both Stephen and Maggie revealed themselves, to the admiration of the gentle unobtrusive Lucy ; and it more than once crossed her mind what a charming quartet they should have through life when Maggie married Philip. Is it an inexplicable thing that a girl should enjoy her lover's society the more for the presence of a third person, and be without the slightest spasm of jealousy, that the third person had the conversation habitually directed to her ? Not when that girl is as tranquil-hearted as Lucy, thoroughly possessed with a belief that she knows the state of her companions' affections, and not prone to the feelings which shake such a belief in the absence of positive evidence against it.

One day—it was the day of Philip's return—Lucy had formed a sudden engagement to spend the evening with Mrs. Kenn whose delicate state of health, threatening to become confirmed illness through an attack of bronchitis, obliged her to resign her functions at the coming bazaar into the hands of other ladies, of whom she wished Lucy to be one. The engagement had been formed in Stephen's presence, and he had heard Lucy promise to rise early and call at six o'clock for Miss Torry, who brought Mrs. Kenn's request.

"Here is another of the moral results of this idiotic bazaar," Stephen burst forth, as soon as Miss Torry had left the room—"taking young ladies from the duties of the domestic hearth into scenes of dissipation among urn-rugs and embroidered reticules! I should like to know what is the proper function of women, if it is not to make reasons for husbands to stay at home, and still stronger reasons for bachelors to go out. If this goes on much longer, the bonds of society will be dissolved."

"Well, it will not go on much longer," said Lucy, laughing, "for the bazaar is to take place on Monday week."

"Thank heaven!" said Stephen, "Kenn himself said the other day, that he didn't like this plan of making vanity do the work of charity; but just as the British public is not reasonable enough to bear direct taxation, so St. Ogg's has not got force of motive enough to build and endow schools without calling in the force of folly."

"Did he say so?" said little Lucy, her hazel eyes opening wide with anxiety. "I never heard him say anything of that kind: I thought he approved of what we were doing."

"I'm sure he approves *you*," said Stephen, smiling at her affectionately; "your conduct in going out to-night looks vicious, I own, but I know there is benevolence at the bottom of it."

"O, you think too well of me," said Lucy, shaking her head with a pretty blush, and there the subject ended. But it was tacitly understood that Stephen would not come in the evening, and on the strength of that tacit understanding he made his morning visit the longer, not saying good-bye until after four.

Maggie was seated in the drawing-room alone, shortly after dinner, when the sound of a footstep on the gravel made her look up, and she saw Mr. Stephen Guest walking up the garden, as if he had come straight from the river. It was very unusual to see him so soon after dinner! He often complained that their dinner-hour was late at Park House. Nevertheless, there he was, in his black dress: he had evidently been home, and must have come again by the river. Maggie

felt her cheeks glowing and her heart beating: it was natural she should be nervous, for she was not accustomed to receive visitors alone. He had seen her look up through the open window, and raised his hat as he walked towards it, to enter that way instead of by the door. He blushed too, and certainly looked as foolish as a young man of some wit and self-possession can be expected to look, as he walked in with a roll of music in his hand, and said with an air of hesitating improvisation—

"You are surprised to see me again, Miss Tulliver—I ought to apologise for coming upon you by surprise, but I wanted to come into the town, and I got our man to row me; so I thought I would bring these things from the 'Maid of Artois' for your cousin: I forgot them this morning. Will you give them to her?"

"Yes," said Maggie, who had risen confusedly not quite knowing what else to do, and who now sat down again.

Stephen laid down his hat, with the music, which rolled on the floor, and sat down in the chair close by her. He had never done so before, and both he and Maggie were quite aware that it was an entirely new position.

"Won't you come out a little way into the garden?" said Stephen.

"Do take my arm," he said, in a low tone, as if it were a secret.

There is something strangely winning to most women in that offer of the firm arm: the help is not wanted physically at that moment; but the sense of help—the presence of strength that is outside them and yet theirs, meets a continual want of the imagination. Either on that ground or some other, Maggie took the arm. And they walked together round the grass-plot and under the drooping green of the laburnum, in the same dim dreamy state as they had been in a quarter of the hour before; only that Stephen had had the look he longed for without yet perceiving in himself the symptoms of returning reasonableness, and Maggie had darting thoughts across the dimness:—how came she to be there?—why had she come out? Not a word was spoken. If it had been, each would have been less intensely conscious of the other.

"Take care of this step," said Stephen, at last.

"O, I will go in now," said Maggie, feeling that the step had come like a rescue. "Good evening."

In an instant she had withdrawn her arm, and was running back to the house. She did not reflect that this sudden action would only add to the embarrassing recollections of the last half hour. She had no thought left for that. She only threw herself into the low armchair, and burst into tears.

"O Philip, Philip, I wish we were together again—so quietly —in the Red Deeps."

Stephen looked after her a moment, then went on to the boat, and was soon landed at the wharf. He spent the evening in the billiard-room, smoking one cigar after another, and losing "lives" at pool. But he would not leave off. He was determined not to think—not to admit any more distinct remembrance than was urged upon him by the perpetual presence of Maggie.

Chapter 7

PHILIP RE-ENTERS

"Stephen will come earlier this morning, I know," said Lucy : "he always does when it's rainy."

Maggie made no answer. She was angry with Stephen : she began to think she should dislike him ; and if it had not been for the rain, she would have gone to her aunt Glegg's this morning, and so have avoided him altogether. As it was, she must find some reason for remaining out of the room with her mother.

But Stephen did not come earlier, and there was another visitor—a nearer neighbour—who preceded him. When Philip entered the room, he was going merely to bow to Maggie, feeling that their acquaintance was a secret which he was bound not to betray, but when she advanced towards him and put out her hand, he guessed at once that Lucy had been taken into her confidence.

Soon Lucy left them alone together and Maggie said, "I told

my brother I wished to see you, Philip—I asked him to release me from my promise, and he consented."

"Then we can at least be friends, Maggie? There is nothing to hinder that now?"

"Will not your father object?" said Maggie, withdrawing her hand.

"I should not give you up on any ground but your own wish, Maggie," said Philip, colouring. "There are points on which I should always resist my father, as I used to tell you. *That* is one."

"Then there is nothing to hinder our being friends, Philip—seeing each other and talking to each other while I am here: I shall soon go away again. I mean to go very soon—to a new situation."

"Is that inevitable, Maggie?"

"Yes: I must not stay here long. It would unfit me for the life I must begin again at last. I can't live in dependence. I can't live with my brother—though he is very good to me. He would like to provide for me; but that would be intolerable to me."

Philip was silent a few moments, and then said in that high, feeble voice which with him indicated the resolute suppression of emotion:—

"Is there no other alternative, Maggie? Is that life, away from those who love you, the only one you will allow yourself to look forward to?"

"Yes, Philip," she said, looking at him pleadingly, as if she entreated him to believe that she was compelled to this course. "At least, as things are; I don't now what may be in years to come. But I begin to think there can never come much happiness to me from loving: I have always had so much pain mingled with it. I wish I could make myself a world outside it, as men do."

"Now, you are returning to your old thought in a new form, Maggie—the thought I used to combat," said Philip with a slight tinge of bitterness. "You want to find out a mode of

renunciation that will be an escape from pain. I tell you again there is no such escape possible except by perverting or mutilating one's nature. What would become of me, if I tried to escape from pain? Scorn and cynicism would be my only opium; unless I could fall into some kind of conceited madness, and fancy myself a favourite of Heaven, because I am not a favourite with men."

"Yes, Philip," she said with her childish contrition when he used to chide her, "you are right, I know. I do always think too much of my own feelings, and not enough of others'—not enough of yours. I had need have you always to find fault with me and teach me: so many things have come true that you used to tell me."

She took up her work and occupied herself resolutely, while Philip watched her.

But soon there came a violent well-known ring at the door-bell resounding through the house.

"O what a startling announcement!" said Maggie, quite mistress of herself, though not without some inward flutter. "I wonder where Lucy is."

Lucy had not been deaf to the signal, and after an interval long enough for a few solicitous but not hurried inquiries, she herself ushered Stephen in.

"Well, old fellow," he said, going straight up to Philip and shaking him heartily by the hand, bowing to Maggie in passing, "it's glorious to have you back again."

"Are you quite well this morning, Miss Tulliver?" said Stephen, turning to Maggie with stiff politeness, and putting out his hand with the air of fulfilling a social duty.

Maggie gave the tips of her fingers, and said, "Quite well, thank you," in a tone of proud indifference.

"I think we people who have not been galloping," Lucy said to Stephen, "are all a little damped by the rain. Let us have some music. We ought to take advantage of having Philip and you together. Give us the duet in 'Masaniello': Maggie has not heard that, and I know it will suit her."

"Come, then," said Stephen, going towards the piano, and giving a foretaste of the tune in his deep "brum-brum", very pleasant to hear.

"You, please, Philip—you play the accompaniment," said Lucy, "and then I can go on with my work. You *will* like to play, shan't you?" she added, with a pretty inquiring look, anxious, as usual, lest she should have proposed what was not pleasant to another, ; but with yearnings towards her unfinished embroidery.

Philip had brightened at the proposition, for there is no feeling, perhaps, except the extremes of fear and grief, that does not find relief in music—that does not make a man sing or play the better ; and Philip had an abundance of pent-up feeling at this moment, as complex as any trio or quartet that was ever meant to express love and jealousy, and resignation and fierce suspicion, all at the same time.

"Come, come," said Lucy ; "music, music."

Maggie always tried in vain to go on with her work when music began. She tried harder than ever to-day ; for the thought that Stephen knew how much she cared for his singing was one that no longer roused a merely playful resistance ; and she knew, too, that it was his habit always to stand so that he could look at her. But it was of no use : she soon threw her work down, and all her intentions were lost in the vague state of emotion produced by the inspiring duet—emotion that seemed to make her at once strong and weak : strong for all enjoyment, weak for all resistance.

"More, more !" said Lucy, when the duet had been encored. "Something spirited again. Maggie always says she likes a great rush of sound."

"It must be 'Let us take the road', then," said Stephen—"so suitable for a wet morning. But are you prepared to abandon the most sacred duties of life, and come and sing with us ?"

"O yes," said Lucy, laughing. "If you will look out the 'Begger's Opera' from the large canterbury. It has a dingy cover."

"That is a great clue, considering there are about a score covers here of rival dinginess," said Stephen, drawing out the canterbury.

"O, play something the while, Philip," said Lucy, noticing that his fingers were wandering over the keys. "What is that you are falling into? something delicious that I don't know."

"Don't you know that? said Philip, bringing out the tune more definitely. "It's from the *Sonnambula*—'Ah! perche non-posso odiarti'. I don't know the opera, but it appears the tenor is telling the heroine that he shall always love her though she may forsake him. You've heard me sing it to the English words, 'I love thee still.' "

It was not quite unintentionally that Philip had wandered into this song, which might be an indirect expression to Maggie of what he could not prevail on himself to say to her directly. Her ears had been open to what he was saying, and when he began to sing, she understood the plaintive passion of the music.

"That's the way with you tenors," said Stephen, who was waiting with music in his hand while Philip finished the song, "You demoralise the fair sex by warbling your sentimental love and constancy under all sorts of vile treatment. Nothing short of having your heads served up in a dish like that mediaeval tenor or troubadour, would prevent you from expressing your entire resignation. I must administer an antidote. while Miss Deane prepares to tear herself away from her bobbins."

Stephen rolled out, with saucy energy—

"Shall I, wasting in despair,
Die because a woman's fair?"

and seemed to make all the air in the room alive with a new influence. Lucy, always proud of what Stephen did, went towards the piano with laughing, admiring looks at him; and Maggie, in spite of resistance to the spirit of the song and to the singer, was taken hold of and shaken by the invisible influence—was borne along by a wave too strong for her.

But angrily resolved not to betray herself, she seized her work, and went on making false stitches and pricking her fingers with much perseverance, not looking up or taking notice of what was going forward until, all the three voices united in "Let us take the road."

I am afraid there would have been a subtle, stealing gratification in her mind if she had known how entirely this saucy, defiant Stephen was occupied with her: how he was passing rapidly from a determination to treat her with ostentatious indifference to an irritating desire for some sign of inclination from her—some interchange of subdued word or look with her. It was not long before he found an opportunity, when they had passed to the music of "The Tempest". Maggie, feeling the need of a footstool, was walking across the room to get one, when Stephen, who was not singing just then, and was conscious of all her movements, guessed her want, and flew to anticipate her, lifting the footstool with an entreating look at her, which made it impossible not to return a glance of gratitude. And then, to have the footstool placed carefully by a too self-confident personage—not *any* self-confident personage, but one in particular, who suddenly looks humble and anxious, and lingers, bending still, to ask if there is not some draught in that position between the window and the fireplace, and if he may not be allowed to move the work-table for her—these things will summon a little of the too ready, traitorous tenderness into a woman's eyes, compelled as she is in her girlish time to learn her life-lessons in very trivial language. And to Maggie such things had not been every-day incidents, but were a new element in her life, and found her keen appetite for homage quite fresh. That tone of gentle solicitude obliged her to look at the face that was bent towards her, and to say, "No, thank you;" and nothing could prevent that mutual glance from being delicious to both, as it had been the evening before.

It was but an ordinary act of politeness in Stephen; it had hardly taken two minutes; and Lucy, who was singing, scarcely noticed it. But to Philip's mind, filled already with a vague anxiety that was likely to find a definite ground for itself in any trivial incident, this sudden eagerness in Stephen, and the

change in Maggie's face, which was plainly reflecting a beam from his, seemed so strong a contrast with the previous overwrought signs of indifference, as to be charged with painful meaning. Stephen's voice, pouring in again, jarred upon his nervous susceptibility as if it had been the clang of sheet iron, and he felt inclined to make the piano shriek in utter discord. He had really seen no communicable ground for suspecting any unusual feeling between Stephen and Maggie : his own reason told him so, and he wanted to go home at once that he might reflect coolly on these false images, till he had convinced himself of their nullity. But then, again, he wanted to stay as long as Stephen stayed—always to be present when Stephen was present with Maggie. It seemed to poor Philip so natural, nay, inevitable, that any man who was near Maggie should fall in love with her ! There was no promise of happiness for her if she were beguiled into loving Stephen Guest : and this thought emboldened Philip to view his own love for her in the light of a less unequal offering. He was beginning to play very falsely under this deafening inward tumult, and Lucy was looking at him in astonishment, when Mrs. Tulliver's entrance to summon them to lunch came as an excuse for abruptly breaking off the music.

Chapter 8

WAKEM IN A NEW LIGHT

Three days later, Lucy contrived to have a private interview with Philip during a visit of Maggie's to her aunt Glegg. For a day and a night Philip turned over in his mind with restless agitation all that Lucy told him in that interview, till he had thoroughly resolved on a course of action. He thought he saw before him now a possibility of altering his position with respect to Maggie, and removing at least one obstacle between them.

Philip took the earliest opportunity to disclose his love for Maggie to his father who was astonished.

"And do you mean to say, then, that you have had any acquaintance with her since you came from abroad ?" said Wakem, at last, with that vain effort which rage always makes to throw as much punishment as it desires to inflict into words and tones, since blows are forbidden.

"Yes : I saw a great deal of her for a whole year before her father's death. We met often in that thicket—the Red Deeps—near Dorlcote Mill. I love her dearly : I shall never love any other woman. I have thought of her ever since she was a little girl."

"Go on, sir !—and you have corresponded with her all this while ?"

"No, I never told her I loved her till just before we parted, and she promised her brother not to see me again or to correspond with me. I am not sure that she loves me, or would consent to marry me. But if she would consent—if she *did* love me well enough—I should marry her."

"And this is the return you make me for all the indulgences I've heaped on you ?" said Wakem, getting white, and beginning to tremble under an enraged sense of impotence before Philip's calm defiance and concentration of purpose.

"No father," said Philip, looking up at him for the first time. "I don't regard it as a return. You have been an indulgent father to me : but I have always felt that it was because you had an affectionate wish to give me as much happiness as my unfortunate lot would admit of—not that it was a debt you expected me to pay by sacrificing all my chances of happiness to satisfy of feelings yours, which I can never share."

"I think most sons would share their fathers' feelings in this case," said Wakem bitterly. "The girl's father was an ignorant mad brute, who was within an inch of murdering me. The whole town knows it. And the brother is just as insolent, only in a cooler way. He forbade her seeing you, you say ; he'll break every bone in your body, for your greater happiness if you don't take care. But you seem to have made up your mind : you have counted the consequences, I suppose. Of course you are independent of me : you can marry this girl to-morrow, if you like : you are a man of five-and-twenty—you can go your way, and I can go mine. We need have no more to do with each other."

Wakem rose and walked towards the door, but something held him back, and instead of leaving the room, he walked up

and down it. Philip was slow to reply, and when he spoke, his tone had a more incisive quietness and clearness than ever.

"No : I can't marry Miss Tulliver, even if she would have me —if I have only my own resources to maintain her with. I have been brought up to no profession. I can't offer her poverty as well as deformity.'

"Ah, *there* is a reason for your clinging to me, doubtless," said Wakem, still bitterly, though Philip's last words had given him a pang : they had stirred a feeling which had been a habit for a quarter of a century. He threw himself into the chair again.

"I expected all this," said Philip. "I know these scenes are often happening between father and son. If I were like other men of my age, I might answer your angry words by still angrier—we might part—I should marry the woman I love, and have a chance of being as happy as the rest. But if it will be a satisfaction to you to annihilate the very object of everything you've done for me, you have an advantage over most fathers : you can completely deprive me of the only thing that would make my life worth having."

Philip paused, but his father was silent.

"You know best what satisfaction you would have, beyond that of gratifying a ridiculous rancour worthy only of wandering savages."

"Ridiculous rancour !" Wakem burst out. "What do you mean ? Damn it ! is a man to be horse-whipped by a boor and love him for it ? Besides, there's that cold, proud devil of a son, who said a word to me I shall not forget when we had the settling. He would be as pleasant a mark for a bullet as I know—if he were worth the expense."

Wakem strode to the door, and, without looking round again, banged it after him.

On thinking the matter over, however, Wakem softened and the same evening he spoke to his son, "But this girl seems to have been fond of you, Phil, else she wouldn't have met you in that way."

Philip's heart was beating rapidly, and a transient flush passed over his face like a gleam. It was not quite easy to speak at once.

"She liked me at King's Lorton, when she was a little girl because I used to sit with her brother a great deal when he had hurt his foot. She had kept that in her memory, and thought of me as a friend of a long while ago. She didn't think of me as a lover, when she met me."

"Well, but you made love to her at last. What did she say then ?" said Wakem.

"She said she *did* love me then."

"Confound it, then, what else do you want ? Is she a jilt ?"

"She was very young then," said Philip hesitatingly. "I'm afraid she hardly knew what she felt. I'm afraid our long separation, and the idea that events must always divide us, may have made a difference."

"But she's in the town. I've seen her at church. Haven't you spoken to her since you came back ?"

"Yes, at Mr. Deane's. But I couldn't renew my proposal to her on several grounds. One obstacle would be removed if you would give your consent—if you would be willing to think of her as a daughter-in-law."

Wakem was silent a little while, pausing before Maggie's picture.

"She's not the sort of woman your mother was, though, Phil," he said, at last. "I saw her at church—she's handsomer than this—deuced fine eyes and fine figure, I saw ; but rather dangerous and unmanageable, eh ?"

"She's very tender and affectionate ; and so simple—without the airs and petty contrivances other women have."

The barrier once thrown down in this way, Philip could talk freely to his father of their entire relation with the Tullivers—of the desire to get the mill and land back into the family—and of its transfer to Guest & Co, as an intermediate step. He could venture now to be persuasive and urgent, and

his father yielded with more readiness than he had calculated on.

"*I* don't care about the mill," he said at last, with a sort of angry compliance. "I've had an infernal deal of bother lately about the mill. Let them pay me for my improvements, that's all. But there's one thing you needn't ask me. I shall have no direct transactions with young Tulliver. If you like to swallow him, for his sister's sake, you may ; but I've no sauce that will make him go down."

I leave you to imagine the agreeable feelings with which Philip went to Mr. Deane the next day, to say that Mr. Wakem was ready to open the negotiations.

Chapter 9

CHARITY IN FULL DRESS

The culmination of Maggie's career as an admired member of society in St. Ogg's was certainly the day of the bazzar, when her simple noble beauty appeared with marked distinction among the more adorned and conventional women around her.

All well-drest St. Ogg's and its neighbourhood were there ; and it would have been worth while to come, even from a distance, to see the fine old hall, with its open roof and carved oaken rafters, and great oaken folding doors, and light shed down from a height on the many-coloured show beneath.

In fact, the perfect fitness of this ancient building for an admirable modern purpose, that made charity truly elegant and led through vanity up to the supply of a deficit, was so striking that hardly a person entered the room without exchanging the remark more than once. Near the great arch over the orchestra was the stone oriel with painted glass, which was one of the venerable inconsistencies of the old hall ; and it was close by this that Lucy had her stall, for the convenience of certain large plain articles which she had taken charge of for Mrs. Kenn. Maggie had begged to sit at the open end of the stall, and to have the sale of these articles rather than of bead-mats and

other elaborate products, of which she had but a dim understanding. But it soon appeared that the gentlemen's dressing-gowns, which were among her commodities, were objects of such general attention and inquiry and excited so troublesome a curiosity as to their lining and comparative merits, together with a determination to test them by trying on, as to make her post a very conspicuous one.

Stephen purchased absolutely nothing from Maggie, until Lucy said, in rather a vexed undertone—

"See, now ; all the things of Maggie's knitting will be gone and you will not have bought one. There are those deliciously soft warm things for the wrists—do buy them."

"Oh, no," said Stephen, "they must be intended for imaginative persons, who can chill themselves on this warm day by thinking of the frosty Caucasus. Stern reason is my forte, you know."

Soon, however, Stephen moved step by step as if he were being unwillingly dragged, until he had got round the open end of the stall, and was half hidden by a screen of draperies. Maggie went on counting her money till she suddenly heard a deep gentle voice saying, "Aren't you very tired ? Do let me bring you something—some fruit or jelly—mayn't I ?

The unexpected tones shook her like a sudden accidental vibration of a harp close by her.

"O no, thank you," she said, faintly, and only half looking up for an instant.

"You look so pale," Stephen insisted, in a more entreating tone. "I'm sure you're exhausted. I must disobey you, and bring something."

"No, indeed, I couldn't take it."

"Are you angry with me ? What have I done ? *Do* look at me."

"Pray, go away," said Maggie, looking at him helplessly. Stephen turned away at once, and saw Philip Wakem seated in the half-hidden corner so that he could command little more than that angle of the hall in which Maggie sat. An entirely

new thought occurred to Stephen, and linking itself with what he had observed of Wakem's manner, and with Lucy's reply to his observation, it convinced him that there had been some former relation between Philip and Maggie beyond that childish one of which he had heard. More than one impulse made him immediately leave the hall and go up-stairs to the refreshment-room, where, walking up to Philip, he sat down behind him, and put his hand on his shoulder.

"Are you studying for a portrait, Phil," he said, "or for a sketch of that oriel window? By George, it makes a capital bit from this dark corner, with the curtain just marking it off."

"I have been studying expression," said Philip, curtly.

"What, Miss Tulliver's? It's rather of the savage-moody order to-day, I think—something of the fallen princess serving behind a counter. Her cousin sent me to her with a civil offer to get her some refreshment, but I have been snubbed, as usual. There's a natural antipathy between us, I suppose: I have seldom the honour to please her."

"What a hypocrite you are!" said Philip, flushing angrily.

"What, because experience must have told me that I'm universally pleasing? I admit the law, but there's some disturbing force here."

"I am going," said Philip, rising abruptly.

"So am I—to get a breath of fresh air: this place gets oppressive. I think I have done suit and service long enough."

The two friends walked down-stairs together without speaking. Philip turned through the outer door into the court-yard, but Stephen, saying, "O, by the by, I must call in here" went on along the passage to one of the rooms at the other end of the building, which were appropriated to the town library. It is clear to you, I hope, that Stephen was not a hypocrite—capable of deliberate doubleness for a selfish end; and yet his fluctuations between the indulgence of a feeling and the systematic concealment of it, might have made a good case in support of Philip's accusation.

Meanwhile, Maggie sat at her stall cold and trembling with that painful sensation in the eyes which comes from resolutely repressed tears. Was her life to be always like this?—always bringing some new source of inward strife? She heard confusedly the busy indifferent voices around her, and wished her mind could flow into that easy, babbling current. It was at this moment that Dr. Kenn, who had quite lately come into the hall, and was now walking down the middle with his hands behind him, taking a general view, fixed his eyes on Maggie for the first time, and was struck with the expression of pain on her beautiful face.

"You find your office rather a fatiguing one, I fear, Miss Tulliver?" said Dr. Kenn.

"It is rather," said Maggie, simply, not being accustomed to simper amiable denials of obvious facts.

"But I can tell Mrs. Kenn that you have disposed of her goods very quickly," he added; "she will be very much obliged to you."

"O, I have done nothing: the gentlemen came very fast to buy the dressing-gowns and embroidered waistcoats; but I think any of the other ladies would have sold more: I didn't know what to say about them."

Dr. Kenn smiled, "I hope I'm going to have you as a permanent parishioner now, Miss Tulliver—am I? You have been at a distance from us hitherto."

"I have been a teacher in a school, and I'm going into another situation of the same kind very soon."

"Ah? I was hoping you would remain among your friends, who are all in this neighbourhood, I believe."

"She has some trouble or other at heart," he thought. "Poor child! she looks as if she might turn out to be one of

'The souls by nature pitched too high
By suffering plung'd too low.'

There's something wonderfully honest in those beautiful eyes".

Philip had not spoken to her himself about the removal of obstacles between them on his father's side—he shrank from

that; but he had told everything to Lucy, with the hope that Maggie, being informed through her, might give him some encouraging sign that their being brought thus much nearer to each other was a happiness to her. The rush of conflicting feelings was too great for Maggie to say much when Lucy, with a face breathing playful joy, like one of Correggio's cherubs, poured forth her triumphant revelation; and Lucy could hardly be surprised that she could do little more than cry with gladness at the thought of her father's wish being fulfilled, and of Tom's getting the Mill again in reward for all his hard striving. The details of preparation for the bazaar had then come to usurp Lucy's attention for the next few days and nothing had been said by the cousins on subjects that were likely to rouse deeper feelings.

But when the bazaar was fairly ended, and the cousins were alone again, resting together at home, Lucy said—

"You must give up going to stay with your aunt Moss the day after to-morrow, Maggie: write a note to her, and tell her you have put it off at my request, and I'll send the man with it. She won't be displeased; you'll have plenty of time to go by-and-by; and I don't want you to go out of the way just now."

"Yes, indeed I must go, dear; I can't put it off, I wouldn't leave aunt Gritty out for the world. And I shall have very little time, for I'm going away to a new situation on the 25th of June."

"Maggie!" said Lucy, almost white with astonishment.

Lucy felt so hurt that for some moments she was unable to speak.

"Maggie," she said at last, "how could you be so unkind to me—not to tell me—to take *such* a step—and now!" She hesitated a little, and then added—"And Philip? I thought everything was going to be so happy. O Maggie—what is the reason? Give it up; let me write. There is nothing now to keep you and Philip apart."

"Yes," said Maggie, faintly. "There is Tom's feeling. He said I must give him up if I married Philip. And I know he

will not change—at least not for a long while—unless something happened to soften him."

"But I will talk to him ; he's coming back this week. And this good news about the Mill will soften him. And I'll talk to him about Philip. Tom's always very compliant to me : I don't think he's so obstinate."

"But I must go," said Maggie, in a distressed voice, "I must leave some time to pass. Dont't press me to stay, dear Lucy."

Lucy was silent for two or three minutes, looking away and ruminating. At length she knelt down by her cousin and looking up in her face with anxious seriousness, said—

"Maggie, is it that you don't love Philip well enough to marry him ?—tell me—trust me."

Maggie held Lucy's hands tightly in silence a little while. Her own hands were quite cold. But when she spoke, her voice was quite clear and distinct.

"Yes, Lucy, I would choose to marry him. I think it would be the best and highest lot for me—to make his life happy. He loved me first. No one else could be quite what he is to me. But I can't divide myself from my brother for life. I must go away, and wait. Pray, don't speak to me again about it."

Lucy obeyed in pain and wonder. The next word she said was—

"Well, dear Maggie, at least you will go to the dance at Park House to-morrow, and have some music and brightness, before you go to pay these dull, dutiful visits. Ah ! here come aunty and the tea."

Chapter 10

THE SPELL SEEMS BROKEN

The suite of rooms opening into each other at Park House, looked duly brilliant with lights and flowers and the personal splendours of sixteen couples, with attendant parents and guardians. The focus of brilliancy was the long drawing room,

where the dancing went forward, under the inspiration of the grand piano.

Maggie at first refused to dance, saying that she had forgotten all the figures—it was so many years since she had danced at school; and she was glad to have that excuse, for it is ill dancing with a heavy heart. But at length the music wrought in her young limbs, and the longing came.

Stephen had not yet asked her to dance—had not yet paid her more than a passing civility. Since yesterday, that inward vision of her which perpetually made part of his consciousness, had been half-screened by the image of Philip Wakem, which came across it like a blot: there was some attachment between her and Philip: at least there was an attachment on his side, which made her feel in some bondage. Here then, Stephen told himself, was another claim of honour which called on him to resist the attraction that was continually threatening to overpower him. He told himself so; and yet he had once or twice felt a certain savage resistance, and at another moment a shuddering repugnance, to this intrusion of Philip's image, which almost made it a new incitement to rush towards Maggie and claim her for himself. Nevertheless he had done what he meant to do this evening: he had kept aloof from her; he had hardly looked at her; and he had been gaily assiduous to Lucy. But now his eyes were devouring Maggie. The possibility that he should dance with Maggie, and have her hand in his so long, was beginning to possess him like a thirst.

He made his way towards her round the couples that were forming for the waltz, and when Maggie became conscious that she was the person he sought she felt, in spite of all the thoughts that had gone before, a growing gladness at heart. Her eyes and cheeks were still brightened with her childlike enthusiasm in the dance.

"They are going to waltz again: it is rather dizzy work to look on, and the room is very warm. Shall we walk about a little? said Stephen.

He took her hand and placed it within his arm, and they walked on into the conservatory.

They had reached the end of the conservatory, and were

obliged to pause and turn. The change of movement brought a new consciousness to Maggie. She blushed deeply, turned away her head, and drew her arm from Stephen's, going up to some flowers to smell. Stephen stood motionless, and still pale.

"O may I get this rose ?" said Maggie, making a great effort to say something, and dissipate the burning sense of irretrievable confession. "I think I am quite wicked with roses— I like to gether them and smell them till they have no scent left."

Stephen was mute : he was incapable of putting a sentence together, and Maggie bent her arm a little upward towards the large half-opened rose that had attracted her. Who has not felt the beauty of a woman's arm ?—the unspeakable suggestions of tenderness that lie in the dimpled elbow, and all the varied gently-lessening curves down to the delicate wrist, with its tiniest, almost imperceptible nicks in the firm softness. A woman's arm touched the soul of a great sculptor two thousand years ago, so that he wrought an image of it for the Parthenon which moves us still as it clasps lovingly the time-worn marble of a headless trunk. Maggie's was such an arm as that—and it had the warm tints of life.

A mad impulse seized on Stephen ; he darted towards the arm, and showered kisses on it, clasping the wrist.

But the next moment Maggie snatched it from him, and glared at him like a wounded war-goddess, quivering with rage and humiliation.

"How dare you ?"—she spoke in a deeply shaken, half-smothered voice. "What right have I given you to insult me ?"

She darted from him into the adjoining room, and threw herself on the sofa, panting and trembling.

She had not been seated more than a few minutes when he came and stood humbly before her. But Maggie's bitter rage was unspent.

"Leave me to myself, if you please," she said, with impetous haughtiness, "and for the future avoid me."

Stephen turned away, and walked backwards and forwards at the other end of the room. There was a dire necessity of going back into the dancing room again, and he was beginning to be conscious of that. They had been absent so short a time that when he went in again the waltz was not ended.

Maggie, too, was not long before she re-entered. All the pride of her nature was stung into activity : the hateful weakness which had dragged her within reach of this wound to her self-respect, had at least wrought its own cure. The thoughts and temptations of the last month should all be flung away into an unvisited chamber of memory : there was nothing to allure her now ; duty would be easy, and all the old calm purposes would reign peacefully once more. She re-entered the drawing-room still with some excited brightness in her face, but with a sense of proud self-command that defied anything to agitate her. She refused to dance again but she talked quite readily and calmly with everyone who addressed her. And when they got home that night, she kissed Lucy with a free heart, almost exulting in this scorching moment, which had delivered her from the possibility of another word or look that would have the stamp of treachery towards that gentle, unsuspicious sister.

Next morning, Philip called on Maggie and they had a friendly chat. "We can just catch the tips of the Scotch firs, from this seat," said Philip.

They had taken each other's hands in silence, but Maggie had looked at him with a more complete revival of the old childlike affectionate smile than he had seen before, and he felt encouraged.

"Yes," she said, "I often look at them, and wish I could see the low sunlight on the stems again. But I have never been that way but once—to the churchyard, with my mother."

"I have been there—I go there – continually," and Philip. "I have nothing but the past to live upon."

A keen remembrance and keen pity impelled Maggie to put her hand in Philip's. They had so often walked hand-in-hand !

"I remember all the spots," she said—"just where you told me of particular things—beautiful stories that I had never heard of before."

"You will go there again soon—wont't you, Maggie ?" said Philip, getting timid. "The Mill will soon be your brother's home again."

"Yes ; but I shall not be there," said Maggie. "I shall only hear of that happiness. I am going away again—Lucy has not told you, perhap ?"

"Then the future will never join on to the past again, Maggie ? That book is quite closed ?"

The grey eyes that had so often looked up at her with entreating worship, looked up at her now, with a last struggling ray of hope in them, and Maggie met them with her large sincere gaze.

"That book never will be closed, Philip," she said, with grave sadness. "I desire no future that will break the ties of the past. But the tie to my brother is one of the strongest. I can do nothing willingly that will divide me always from him."

"Is that the only reason that would keep us apart for ever, Maggie ?" said Philip, with a desperate determination to have a definite answer.

"The only reason," said Maggie, with calm decision. And she believed it. At that moment she felt as if the enchanted cup had been dashed to the ground. The reactionary excitement that gave her a proud self-mastery had not subsided, and she looked at the future with a sense of calm choice.

They sat hand-in-hand without looking at each other or speaking for a few minutes : in Maggie's mind the first scenes of love and parting were more present than the actual moment, and she was looking at Philip in the Red Deeps.

Philip felt that he ought to have been thoroughly happy in that answer of hers : she was an open and transparent as a rock-pool. Why was he not thoroughly happy ? Jealousy is never satisfied with anything short of an omniscience that would detect the subtlest fold of the heart.

Chapter II

IN THE LANE

Maggie had been four days at her aunt Moss's, giving the early June sunshine quite a new brightness in the care-dimmed eyes of that affectionate woman, and making an epoch for her cousins great and small, who were learning her words and actions by heart, as if she had been a transient *avatar* of perfect wisdom and beauty.

She was standing on the causeway with her aunt and a group of cousins feeding chickens, at that quiet moment in the life of the farmyard before the afternoon milking time.

Maggie, with her bonnet over her arm, was smiling down at the hatch of small fluffy thickness, when her aunt exclaimed—

"Goodness me! who is that gentleman coming in at the gate?"

"It is Mr. Stephen Guest," said Maggie, rather faintly. "My cousin Lucy's—a gentleman who is very intimate at my cousin's."

Stephen was already close to them, had jumped off his horse and now raised his hat as he advanced.

"Hold the horse, Willy," said Mrs. Moss to the twelve-year-old boy.

"No thank you," said Stephen, pulling at the horse's impatiently tossing head. "I must be going again immediately. I have a message to deliver to you, Miss Tulliver—on private business. May I take the liberty of asking you to walk a few yards with me?"

Not a word was spoken till they were out in the lane, and had waked four or five yards, when Maggie, who had been looking straight before her all the while, turned again to walk back, saying, with haughty resentment—

"There is no need for me to go any further. I don't know whether you consider it gentlemanly and delicate conduct to place me in a position that forced me to come out with you—or

whether you wished to insult me still further by thrusting an interview upon me in this way."

"Of course you are angry with me for coming," said Stephen bitterly. "Of course it is of no consequence what a man has to suffer—it is only your woman's dignity that you care about."

Maggie gave a slight start, such as might have come from the slightest possible electric shock.

"As if it were not enough that I'm entangled in this way—that I'm mad with love for you—that I resist the strongest passion a man can feel, because I try to be true to other claims—but you must treat me as if I were a coarse brute, who would willingly offend you. And when, if I had my own choice, I should ask you to take my hand, and my fortune, and my whole life, and do what you liked with them!

"You must not say these things—I must not hear them," she said, looking down in misery, as Stephen came in front of her, to prevent her from going farther towards the gate. "I'm very sorry for any pain you have to go through; but it is of no use to speak."

"Then, dearest, look at me," said Stephen, in deepest, tenderest tones of entreaty. "Don't go away from me yet. Give me a moment's happiness—make me feel you've forgiven me."

"Yes, I do forgive you," said Maggie, shaken by those tones, and all the more frightened at herself. "But pray let me go in again. Pray go away."

A great tear fell from under her lowered eyelids.

"I can't go away from you—I can't leave you," said Stephen, with still more passionate pleading. "I shall come back again if you send me away with this coldness—I can't answer for myself. But if you will go with me only a little way, I can live on that. You see plainly enough that your anger has only made me ten times more unreasonable."

"Take my arm," said Stephen entreatingly; and she took it, feeling all the while as if she were sliding downwards in a nightmare.

"There is no end to this misery," she began, struggling to repel the influence by speech. "It is wicked—base—ever allowing a word or look that Lucy—that others might not have seen. Think of Lucy."

"I do think of her—bless her. If I didn't—" Stephen had laid his hand on Maggie's that rested on his arm, and they both felt it difficult to speak.

"And I have other ties," Maggie went on, at last, with a desperate effort,—"even if Lucy did not exist."

"You are engaged to Philip Wakem," said Stephen, hastily. "Is it so?"

"I consider myself engaged to him—I don't mean to marry anyone else."

Stephen was silent again until they had turned out of the sun into a side lane, all grassy and sheltered. Then he burst out impetuously—

"It is unnatural—it is horrible. Maggie, if you loved me as I love you, we should throw everything else to the winds for the sake of belonging to each other. We should break all these mistaken ties that were made in blindness, and determine to marry each other."

"And after all," he went on, in an impatient tone, trying to defeat his own scruples as well as hers, "I am breaking no positive engagement:—if Lucy's affections had been withdrawn from me and given to someone else, I should have felt no right to assert a claim on her. If you are not absolutely pledged to Philip, we are neither of us bound."

She was silent for a few moments, with her eyes fixed on the ground; then she drew a deep breath, and said, looking up at him with solemn sadness—

"O it is difficult—life is very difficult. It seems right to me sometimes that we should follow our strongest feeling;—but then, such feelings continually come across the ties that all our former life has made for us—the ties that have made others dependent on us—and would cut them in two. If life were quite easy and simple, as it might have been in paradise, and we could always see that one being first towards whom......I mean, if

life did not make duties for us before love comes—love would be a sign that two people ought to belong to each other. But I see—I feel it is not so now: there are things we must renounce in life: some of us must resign love. Many things are difficult and dark to me; but I see one thing quite clearly—that I must not, cannot seek my own happiness by sacrificing others. Love is natural: but surely pity and faithfulness and memory are natural too. And they would live in me still, and punish me if I did not obey them. I should be haunted by the suffering I had caused. Our love would be poisoned. Don't urge me; help me—help me *because* I love you."

"Dearest," he said, in scarcely more than a whisper, while his arm stole round her, "I'll do, I'll bear anything you wish. But—one kiss—one—the last—before we part."

One kiss—and then a long look—until Maggie said, tremulously. "Let me go—let us make haste back."

Chapter 12

A FAMILY PARTY

Maggie left her good aunt Gritty at the end of the week, and went to Garum Firs to pay her visit to aunt Pullet according to agreement. In the meantime, unexpected things had happened, and there was to be a family party at Garum to discuss and celebrate a change in the fortunes of the Tullivers.

Lucy came so early as to have the start even of aunt Glegg; for she longed to have some undisturbed talk with Maggie about the wonderful news. It seemed—did it not? said Lucy, with her prettiest air of wisdom—as if everything, even other people's misfortunes (poor creatures!) were conspiring now to make poor dear aunt Tulliver, and cousin Tom, and haughty Maggie too, if they were not obstinately bent on the contrary, as happy as they deserved to be after all their troubles. To think that the very day—the *very day*—after Tom had come back from Newcastle, that unfortunate young Jetsome, whom Mr. Wakem had placed at the Mill, had been pitched off his horse in a drunken fit, and was lying at St. Ogg's in a dangerous state, that Wakem had signified his wish that the new purchasers should enter on the premises at once! It

was very dreadful for that unhappy young man, but it did seem as if the misfortune had happened then, rather than at any other time, in order that cousin Tom might all the sooner have the fit reward of his exemplary conduct—papa thought so very highly of him. Aunt Tulliver must certainly go to the Mill now, and keep house for Tom: that was rather a loss to Lucy in the matter of household comfort, but then, to think of poor aunty being in her old place again, and gradually getting comforts about her there!

Maggie jumped up to kiss Tom as he entered, with strong feelings, at this first meeting since the prospect of returning to the Mill had been opened to him; and she kept his hand, leading him to the chair by her side. To have no cloud between herself and Tom was still a perpetual yearning in her, that had its root deeper than all change. He smiled at her very kindly this evening, and said, "Well, Maggie, how's aunt Moss?"

"Come, come, sir," said Mr. Glegg, putting out his hand. "Why, you're such a big man, you carry all before you, it seems. You're come into your luck a good deal earlier than us old folks did—but I wish you joy, I wish you joy. You'll get the Mill all for your own again some day, I'll be bound. You won't stop half-way up the hill."

"But I hope he'll bear in mind as it's his mother's family as he owes it to," said Mrs. Glegg. "If he hadn't had them to take after, he'd ha' been poorly off. There was never any failures, nor lawing, nor wastefulness in our family—nor dying without wills—"

"No, nor sudden deaths," said aunt Pullet; "allays the doctor called in. But Tom had the Dodson skin: I said that from the first. And I don't know what *you* mean to do, sister Glegg, but I mean to give him a table-cloth of all my three biggest sizes but one, besides sheets. I don't say what more I shall do; but *that* I shall do and if I should die to-morrow, Mr. Pullet, you'll bear it in mind—though you'll be blundering with the keys, and never remember as that on the third shelf o' the left-hand wardrobe, behind the night-caps with the broad ties—not the narrow-frilled uns—is the key o' the drawer in the Blue Room, where the key o' the Blue Closet is. You'll make a

mistake, and I shall never be worthy to know it. You've a memory for my pills and draughts, wonderful—I'll allays say that of you—but you're lost among the keys." This gloomy prospect of the confusion that would ensue on her decease was very affecting to Mrs. Pullet.

It appeared, when it was time to go home, that the man-servant was to ride the horse, and cousin Tom was to drive home his mother and Lucy. "You must sit by yourself, aunty," said that contriving young lady, "because I must sit by Tom : I've a great deal to say to him."

In the eagerness of her affectionate anxiety for Maggie, Lucy could not persuade herself to defer a conversation about her with Tom, who, she thought, with such a cup of joy before him as this rapid fulfilment of his wish about the Mill, must become pliant and flexible. Her nature supplied her with no key to Tom's ; and she was puzzled as well as pained to notice the unpleasant change on his countenance when she gave him the history of the way in which Philip had used his influence with his father. She had counted on this revelation as a great stroke of policy, which was to turn Tom's heart towards Philip at once, and besides that, prove that the elder Wakem was ready to receive Maggie with all the honours of a daughter-in-law. Nothing was wanted, then, but for dear Tom, who always had that pleasant smile when he looked at cousin Lucy, to turn completely round, say the opposite of what he had always said before, and declare that he, for his part, was delighted that all the old grievances should be heated, and that Maggie should have Philip with all suitable despatch : in cousin Lucy's opinion nothing could be easier.

But Tom's inward criticism of his father's faults did not prevent him from adopting his father's prejudice ; it was a prejudice against a man of lax principle and lax life, and it was a meeting point for all the disappointed feelings of family and personal pride. Other feelings added their force to produce Tom's bitter repugnance to Philip, and to Maggie's union with him ; and notwithstanding Lucy's power over her strong-willed cousin, she got nothing but a cold refusal ever to sanction such a marriage : "but of course Maggie could do as she liked—she had declared her determination to be independent. For Tom's

part, he held himself bound by his duty to his father's memory, and by every manly feeling, never to consent to any relation with the Wakems."

Thus, all that Lucy had effected by her zealous mediation was to fill Tom's mind with the expectation that Maggie's perverse resolve to go into a situation again, would presently metamorphose itself, as her resolves were apt to do, into something equally perverse, but entirely different—a marriage with Philip Wakem.

Chapter 13

BORNE ALONG BY THE TIDE

In less than a week Maggie was at St. Ogg's again,—outwardly in much the same position as when her visit there had just begun. It was easy for her to fill her mornings apart from Lucy without any obvious effort ; for she had her promised visits to pay to her aunt Glegg, and it was natural that she should give her mother more than usual of her companionship in these last weeks, especially as there were preparations to be thought of for Tom's housekeeping. But Lucy would hear of no pretext for her remaining away in the evenings : she must always come from aunt Glegg's before dinner—"else what shall I have of you ?" said Lucy, with a tearful pout that could not be resisted. And Mr. Stephen Guest had unaccountably taken to dining at Mr. Deane's as often as possible, instead of avoiding that, as he used to do.

Maggie, all this time, moved about with a quiescence and even torpor of manner, so contrasted with her usual fitful brightness and ardour, that Lucy would have to seek some other cause for such a change, if she had not been convinced that the position in which Maggie stood between Philip and her brother, and the prospect of her self-imposed wearisome banishment, were quite enough to account for a large amount of depression. But under this torpor there was a fierce battle of emotions, such as Maggie in all her life of struggle had never known or foreboded : it seemed to her as if all the worst evil in her had lain in ambush till now, and had suddenly started up full-armed with hideous, over-powering strength ! There were moments in

which a cruel selfishness seemed to be getting possession of her: why should not Lucy—why should not Philip suffer? *She* had had to suffer through many years of her life; and who had renounced anything for her? And when something like that fulness of existence—love, wealth, ease, refinement—all that her nature craved, was brought, within her reach, why was she to forego it, that another might have it—another, who perhaps needed it less? But amidst all this new passionate tumult there were the old voices making themselves heard with rising power, till from time to time, the tumult seemed quelled. *Was* that existence which tempted her the full existence she dreamed? Where, then, would be all the memories of early striving, all that deep pity for another's pain, which had been nurtured in her through years of affection and hardship, all the divine presentiment of something higher than mere personal enjoyment which had made the sacredness of life?

And yet, since this strange, sweet, subduing influence did not, should not conquer her—since it was to remain simply her own suffering..... her mind was meeting Stephen's in that thought of his, that they might still snatch moments of mute confession before the parting came. For was not he suffering too? She saw it daily—saw it in the sickened look of fatigue with which, as soon as he was not compelled to exert himself, he relapsed into indifference towards everything but the possibility of watching her. Could she refuse sometimes to answer that beseeching look which she felt to be following her like a low murmur of love and pain? She refused it less, till at last the evening for them both was sometimes made of a moment's mutual gaze:—they thought of it till it came, and when it had come, they thought of nothing else. One other thing Stephen seemed now and then to care for, and that was to sing: it was a way of speaking to Maggie. Perhaps he was not distinctly conscious that he was impelled to it by a secret longing—running counter to all his self-confessed resolves—to deepen the hold he had on her. Watch your own speech, and notice how it is guided by your less conscious purposes, and you will understand that contradiction in Stephen.

Philip Wakem was a less frequent visitor, but he came occasionally in the evening, and it happened that he was there

when Lucy said, as they sat out on the lawn, near sunset—

"Now Maggie's tale of visits to aunt Glegg is completed, I mean that we shall go out boating every day until she goes. She has not had half enough boating, because of these tire-some visits, and she likes it better than anything. Don't you, Maggie?"

"Better than any sort of locomotion, I hope you mean." said Philip, smiling at Maggie.

"Should you like to be her boatman?" said Lucy. "Because, if you would, you can come with us and take an oar. If the Floss were but a quiet lake instead of a river, we should be independent of any gentleman, for Maggie can row splendidly. As it is, we are reduced to ask services of knights and squires, who do not seem to offer them with great alacrity."

She looked playful reproach at Stephen. He took no notice, but still kept aloof: he had done so frequently during Philip's recent visits.

"You don't seem inclined for boating," said Lucy, when he came to sit down by her on the bench. "Doesn't rowing suit you now?"

"O, I hate a large party in a boat," he said, almost irritably. "I'll come when you have no one else."

"As Miss Deane didn't know she was excluding others by inviting me," said Philip, "I am bound to resign."

"No, indeed, you shall not," said Lucy, much vexed. "I particularly wish for your company to-morrow. The tide will suit at half-past ten: it will be a delicious time for a couple of hours to row to Luckreth and walk back, before the sun gets too hot. And how can you object to four people in a boat?" she added, looking at Stephen.

"I don't object to the people, but the number," said Stephen, who had recovered himself and was rather ashamed of his rudeness, "if I voted for a fourth at all, of course it would be you, Phil. But we won't divide the pleasure of escorting the ladies; we'll take it alternately. I'll go the next day."

This incident had the effect of drawing Philip's attention with freshened solicitude towards Stephen and Maggie; but presently music was proposed and Mrs. Tulliver and Mr. Deane being occupied with cribbage, Maggie sat apart near the table where the books and work were placed —doing nothing, however, but listening abstractedly to the music. Stephen presently turned to a duet which he insisted that Lucy and Philip should sing: he had often done the same thing before; but this evening Philip thought he divined some double intention in every word and look of Stephen's, and watched him keenly—angry with himself all the while for this clinging suspicion. For had not Maggie virtually denied any ground for his doubts on her side? and she was truth itself: it was impossible not to believe her word and glance when they had last spoken together in the garden. Stephen might be strongly fascinated by her (what was more natural?), but Philip felt himself rather base for intruding on what must be his friend's painful secret. Still, he watched. Stephen, moving away from the piano, sauntered slowly towards the table near which Maggie sat, and turned over the newspapers, apparently in mere idleness. Then he seated himself with his back to the piano, dragging a newspaper under his elbow, and thrusting his hand through his hair; as if he had been attracted by some bit of local news in the *Laceham Courier*. He was in reality looking at Maggie, who had not taken the slightest notice of his approach. She had always additional strength of resistance when Philip was present, just as we can restrain our speech better in a spot that we feel to be hallowed. But at last she heard the word "dearest", uttered in the softest tone of pained entreaty, like that of a patient who asks for something that ought to have been given without asking. She had never heard that word since the moments in the lane at Basset, when it had come from Stephen again and again, almost as involuntarily as if it had been an inarticulate cry. Philip could hear no word, but he had moved to the opposite side of the piano, and could see Maggie start and blush, raise her eyes an instant towards Stephen's face, but immediately look apprehensively towards himself. It was not evident to her that Philip had observed her but a pang of shame, under the sense of this concealment, made

her move from her chair and walk to her mother's side to watch the game at cribbage.

Philip went home soon after in a state of hideous doubt mingled with wretched certainty. It was impossible for him now to resist the conviction that there was some mutual consciousness between Stephen and Maggie; and for half the night his irritable, susceptible nerves were pressed upon almost to frenzy by that one wretched fact: he could attempt no explanation that would reconcile it with her words and actions. When, at last, the need for belief in Maggie rose to its habitual predominance, he was not long in imagining the truth—she was struggling, she was banishing herself—this was the clue to all he had seen since his return. But athwart that belief there came other possibilities that would not be driven out of sight. His imagination wrought out the whole story: Stephen was madly in love with her; he must have told her so; she had rejected him, and was hurrying away. But would he give her up, knowing—Philip felt the fact with heart-crushing despair—that she was made half helpless by her feeling towards him?

When the morning came, Philip was too ill to think of keeping his engagement to go in the boat. In his present agitation he could decide on nothing: he could only alternate between contradictory intentions.

He wrote a brief note to Stephen, and sent it early by the servant, saying that he was not well enough to fulfil his engagement to Miss Deane. Would Stephen take his excuse, and fill his place?

Lucy had arranged a charming plan, which had made her quite content with Stephen's refusal to go in the boat. She discovered that her father was to drive to Lindum this morning at ten: Lindum was the very place she wanted to go to, to make purchases—important purchases, which must by no means be put off to another opportunity; and aunt Tulliver must go too, because she was concerned in some of the purchases.

"You will have your row in the boat just the same, you know," she said to Maggie when they went out of the breakfast-room and up-stairs together; "Philip will be here at half past ten, and it is a delicious morning. Now, don't say a word

against it, you dear dolorous thing. What is the use of my being a fairy godmother, if you set your face against all the wonders I work for you ? Don't think of awful cousin Tom : you may disobey him a little."

Maggie did not persist in objecting. She was almost glad of the plan : for perhaps it would bring her some strength and calmness to be alone with Philip again : it was like revisiting the scene of a quieter life, in which the very struggles were repose, compared with the daily tumult of the present. She prepared herself for the boat, and at half-past ten sat waiting in the drawing room.

The ring of the door-bell was punctual, and she was thinking with half sad, affectionate pleasure of the surprise Philip would have in finding that he was to be with her alone, when she distinguished a firm rapid step across the hall, that was certainly not Philip's : the door opened, and Stephen Guest enterned.

In the first moment they were both too much agitated to speak : for Stephen had learned from the servant that the others were gone out. Maggie had started up and sat down again, with her heart beating violently ; and Stephen, throwing down his cap and gloves, came and sat by her in silence. She thought Philip would be coming soon ; and with great effort—for she trembled visibly—she rose to go a distant chair.

"He is not coming," said Stephen, in a low tone. "*I* am going in the boat."

"O, we can't go," said Maggie, sinking into her chair again "Lucy did not expect—she would be hurt. Why is not Philip come ?"

"He is not well ; he asked me to come instead."

"Lucy is gone to Lindum." said Maggie, taking off her bonnet, with hurried, trembling fingers. "We must not go."

"Very well," said Stephen, dreamily, looking at her, as he rested his arm on the back of his chair. "Then we'll stay here."

He was looking into her deep, deep eyes—far-off and mysterious as the starlit blackness, and yet very near, and timidly

loving. Maggie sat perfectly still—perhaps for moments, perhaps for minutes—until the helpless trembling had ceased, and there was a warm glow on her cheek.

"The man is waiting—he has taken the cushions." she said. "Will you go and tell him ?"

"What shall I tell him ?" said Stephen, almost in a whisper. He was looking at the lips now.

Maggie made no answer.

"Let us go," Stephen murmured, entreatingly, rising, and taking her hand to raise her too. We shall not be long together." And they went.

They glided rapidly along. Stephen rowing, helped by the backward-flowing tide, past the Tofton trees and houses—on between the silent sunny fields and pastures, which seemed filled with a natural joy that had no reproach for theirs.

Some low, subdued, languid exclamation of love came from Stephen from time to time, as he went on rowing idly, half automatically : otherwise they spoke no word ; for what could words have been but an inlet to thought ?

Maggie was only dimly conscious of the banks, as they passed them, and dwelt with no recognition on the villages : she knew there were several to be passed before they reached Luckreth, where they always stopped and left the boat. At all times she was so liable to fits of absence, that she was likely enough to let her way-marks pass unnoticed.

But at last Stephen, who had been rowing more and more idly, ceased to row, laid down the oars, folded his arms, and looked down on the water as if watching the pace at which the boat glided without his help. The sudden change roused Maggie. She looked at the far stretching field—at the banks close by—and felt that they were entirely strange to her. A terrible alarm took possession of her.

"O, have we passed Luckreth—where we were to stop ?" she exclaimed, looking back to see if the place were out of sight. No village was to be seen. She turned round again, with a look of distressed questioning at Stephen.

He went on watching the water, and said, in a strange, dreamy, absent tone, "Yes—a long way."

"O what shall I do ?" cried Maggie, in an agony. "We shall not get home for hours—and Lucy—O God, help me !"

She clasped her hands and broke into a sob, like a frightened child : she thought of nothing but of meeting Lucy, and seeing her look of pained surprise and doubt—perhaps of just upbraiding.

Stephen moved and sat beside her, and gently drew down the clasped hands.

"Maggie," he said in a deep tone of slow decision, "let us never go home again—till no one can part us—till we are married."

"See, Maggie, how everything has come without our seeking—in spite of all our efforts. We never thought of being alone together again : it has all been done by others. See how the tide is carrying us out—away from all those unnatural bonds that we have been trying to make faster round us—and trying in vain. It will carry us on to Torby, and we can land there, and get some carriage, and hurry on to York, and then to Scotland—and never pause a moment till we are bound to each other, so that only death can part us. It is the only right thing, dearest : it is the only way of escaping from this wretched entanglement. Everything has concurred to point it out to us. We have contrived nothing, we have thought of nothing ourselves."

Stephen spoke with deep, earnest pleading. Maggie listened—passing from her startled wonderment to the yearning after that belief, that the tide was doing it all—that she might glide along with the swift, silent stream, and not struggle any more. But across that stealing influence came the terrible shadow of past thoughts : and the sudden horror lest now, at last, the moment of fatal intoxication was close upon her, called up feelings of angry resistance towards Stephen.

"Let me go !" she said, in an agitated tone, flashing an indignant look at him, and trying to get her hands free. "You have wanted to deprive me of any choice. You know we were

come too far—you have dared to take advantage of my thoughtlessness. It is unmanly to bring me into such a position."

Stung at this reproach, he released her hands, moved back to his former place, and folded his arms, in a sort of desperation at the difficulty Maggie's words had made present to him.

At last he said, in a tone of suppressed rage—

"I didn't notice that we had passed Luckreth till we had got to the next village; and then it came into my mind that we would go on. I can't justify it: I ought to have told you. It is enough to make you hate me—since you don't love me well enough to make everything else indifferent to you—as I do you. Shall I stop the boat and try to get you out here? I'll tell Lucy that I was mad—and that you hate me—and you shall be clear of me for ever. No one can blame you, because I have behaved unpardonably to you."

Maggie was paralysed: it was easier to resist Stephen's pleading, than this picture he had called up of himself suffering, while she was vindicated—easier even to turn away from his look of tenderness than from this look of angry misery, that seemed to place her in selfish isolation from him. He had called up a state of feeling in which the reasons which had acted on her conscience seemed to be transmuted into mere self-regard. The indignant fire in her eyes was quenched, and she began to look at him with timid distress. She had reproached him for being hurried into irrevocable trespass—she, who had been so weak herself.

"As if I shouldn't feel what happened to you—just the same," she said, with reproach of another kind—the reproach of love, asking for more trust.

He felt all the relenting in her look and tone—it was heaven opening again. He moved to her side, and took her hand.

They glided along in this way, both resting in that silence as in a heaven, both dreading lest their feelings should be divided again—till they became aware that the clouds had gathered.

"You will be chill, Maggie, in this thin dress. Let me raise the cloak over your shoulders. Get up an instant, dearest."

Maggie obeyed: there was an unspeakable charm in being told what to do, and having everything decided for her. She sat down again, covered with the cloak, and Stephen took to his oars again, making haste; for they must try to get to Torby as fast as they could.

Presently Stephen observed a vessel coming after them. Several vessels, among them the steamer to Mudport, had passed them with the early tide, but for the last hour they had seen none. He looked more and more eagerly at this vessel, as if a new thought had come into his mind along with it, and then he looked at Maggie, hesitatingly.

"Maggie, dearest," he said at last, "if this vessel should be going to Mudport, or to any convenient place on the coast northward, it would be our best plan to get them to take us on board. You are fatigued—and it may soon rain—it may be a wretched business, getting to Torby in this boat. It's only a trading vessel, but I daresay you can be made tolerably comfortable. We'll take the cushions out of the boat. It is really our best plan. They'll be glad enough to take us: I've got plenty of money about me; I can pay them well."

Maggie's heart began to beat with reawakened alarm at this new proposition; but she was silent—one course seemed as difficult as another.

Stephen hailed the vessel. It was a Dutch vessel going to Mudport, the English mate informed him, and, if this wind held, would be there in less than two days.

"We had got out too far with our boat," said Stephen. "I was trying to make for Torby. But I'm afraid of the weather; and this lady—my wife—will be exhausted with fatigue and hunger. Take us on board—will you?—and haul up the boat. I'll will pay you well."

Maggie, now really faint and trembling with fear, was taken on board, making an interesting object of contemplation to admiring Dutchmen.

Maggie was to sleep all night on the poop; it was better than going below; and she was covered with the warmest wrappings the ship could furnish. It was still early, when the fatigues of the day brought on a drowsy longing for perfect rest, and she laid down her head.

Chapter 14

WAKING

When Maggie was gone to sleep, Stephen, weary too with his unaccustomed amount of rowing, walked and lounged about the deck, far on into mid-might. At last fatigue conquered restlessness, and he rolled himself up in a piece of tarpaulin on the deck near Maggie's feet.

She had fallen asleep before nine, and had been sleeping for six hours before the faintest hint of a midsummer daybreak was discernible. She awoke from that vivid dreaming which makes the margin of our deeper rest.

Stephen was not by her now: she was alone with her own memory and her own dread. The irrevocable wrong that must blot her life had been committed: she had brought sorrow into the lives of others—into the lives that were knit up with hers by trust and love. The feeling of a few short weeks had hurried her into the sins her nature had most recoiled from—breach of faith and cruel selfishness; she had rent the ties that had given meaning to duty, and had made herself an outlawed soul, with no guide but the wayward choice of her own passion. And where would that lead her?—where had it led her now? She had said she would rather die than fall into that temptation. She felt it now—now that the consequences of such a fall had come before the outward act was completed. There was at least this fruit from all her years of striving after the highest and best—that her soul, though betrayed, beguiled, ensnared, could never deliberately consent to a choice of the lower. And a choice of what? O God—not a choice of joy, but of conscious cruelty and hardness: for could she ever cease to see before her Lucy and Philip, with their murdered trust and hopes? Her life with Stephen could have no sacredness: she must for ever sink and wander vaguely, driven by uncertain im-

pulse; for she had let go the clue of life—that clue which once in the far-off years her young need had clutched so strongly. She had renounced all delights then, before she knew them, before they had come within her reach. Philip had been right when he told her that she knew nothing of renunciation: she had thought it was quiet ecstasy; she saw it face to face now—that sad patient living strength which holds the clue of life, and saw that the thorns were for ever pressing on its brow. The yesterday, which could never be revoked—if she could change it now for any length of inward silent endurance, she would have bowed beneath that cross with a sense of rest.

She could see Stephen now lying on the deck still fast asleep, and with the sight of him there came a wave of anguish that found its way in a long-suppressed sob. The worst bitterness of parting—the thought that urged the sharpest inward cry for help, was the pain it must give to *him.*

Something roused Stephen too, and, getting up from his hard bed, he came to sit beside her.

She let him take her hand when he came to sit down beside her, and smiled at him—only with rather a sad glance; she could say nothing to pain him till the moment of possible parting was near. And so they drank their cup of coffee together, and walked about the deck, and heard the captain's assurance that they should be in at Mudport by five o'clock, each with an inward burthen: but in him it was an undefined fear, which he trusted to the coming hours to dissipate; in her it was a definite resolve on which she was trying silently to tighten her hold.

"Here we are in sight of Mudport," he said, at last. "Now dearest," he added, turning towards her with a look that was half-beseeching, "the worst part of your fatigue is over. On the land we can command swiftness. In another hour and a half we shall be in a chaise together and that will seem rest to you after this."

Maggie felt it was time to speak: it would only be unkind now to assent by silence. She spoke in the lowest tone, as he had done, but with distinct decision.

"We shall not be together—we shall have parted."

The blood rushed to Stephen's face.

"We shall not," he said. "I'll die first."

It was as he had dreaded—there was a struggle coming. But neither of them dared to say another word, till the boat was let down, and they were taken to the landing-place.

A porter guided them to the nearest inn and posting-house, and Stephen gave the order for the chaise as they passed through the yard. Maggie took no notice of this, and only said, "Ask them to show us into a room where we can sit down."

When they entered, Maggie did not sit down, and Stephen, whose face had a desperate determination in it, was about to ring the bell, when she said, in a firm voice :—

"I'm not going : we must part here."

"Maggie," he said, turning round towards her, and speaking in the tones of a man who feels a process of torture beginning, "do you mean to kill me ? What is the use of it now ? The whole thing is done."

"No, it is not done," said Maggie. "Too much is done : more than we can ever remove the trace of. But I will go no farther. Don't try to prevail with me again. I couldn't choose yesterday."

What was he to do ? He dared not go near her—her anger might leap out, and make a new barrier. He walked backwards and forwards in maddening perplexity.

"Maggie" he said, at last, pausing before her, and speaking in a tone of imploring wretchedness, "have some pity—hear me —forgive me for what I did yesterday. I will obey you now— I will do nothing without your full consent. But don't blight our lives for ever by a rash perversity that can answer no good purpose to anyone—that can only create new evils. Sit down, dearest ; wait—think what you are going to do. Don't treat me as if you couldn't trust me."

He had chosen the most effective appeal ; but Maggie's will was fixed unswervingly on the coming wrench. She had made up her mind to suffer.

"We must not wait," she said, in a low but distinct voice; "we must part at once."

"We *can't* part, Maggie," said Stephen, more impetuously, "I can't bear it. What is the use of inflicting that misery on me? The blow—whatever it may have been—has been struck now. Will it help anyone else that you should drive me mad?"

"I will not begin any future, even for you," said Maggie, tremulously, "with a deliberate consent to what ought not to have been. What I told you at Basset I feel now: I would rather have died than fall into this temptation. It would have been better if we had parted for ever then. But we must part now."

"We will *not* part," Stephen burst out, instinctively, placing his back against the door—forgetting everything he had said a few moments before; "I will not endure it. You'll make me desperate—I shan't know what I do."

Maggie trembled. She felt that the parting could not be effected suddenly. She must rely on a slower appeal to Stephen's better self—she must be prepared for a harder task than that of rushing away while resolution was fresh. She sat down.

"Remember what you felt weeks ago," she began, with beseeching earnestness—"remember what we both felt—that we owed ourselves to others, and must conquer every inclination which could make us false to that debt. We have failed to keep our resolutions; but the wrong remains the same."

"No, it does *not* remain the same," said Stephen. "We have proved that it was impossible to keep our resolutions. We have proved that the feeling which draws us towards each other is too strong to be overcome: that natural law surmounts every other; we can't help what it clashes with."

"It is not so, Stephen—I'm quite sure that is wrong. I have tried to think it again and again; but I see, if we judged in that way, there would be a warrant for all treachery and cruelty—we should justify breaking the most sacred ties that can ever be formed on earth. If the past is not to bind us, where can duty lie? We should have no law but the inclination of the moment."

"But there are ties that can't be kept by mere resolution," said Stephen, starting up and walking about again. "What is outward faithfulness? Would they have thanked us for anything so hollow as constancy without love?"

Maggie did not answer immediately. She was undergoing an inward as well as an outward contest. At last she said, with a passionate assertion of her conviction, as much against herself as against him—

"That seems right—at first: but when I look further, I'm sure it is *not* right. Faithfulness and constancy mean something else besides doing what is easiest and pleasantest to ourselves. They mean renouncing whatever is opposed to the reliance others have in us—whatever would cause misery to those whom the course of our lives has made dependent on us. If we—if I had been better, nobler, those claims would have been so strongly present with me—I should have felt them pressing on my heart so continually, just as they do now in the moments when my conscience is awake—that the opposite feeling would never have grown in me, as it has done: it would have been quenched at once—I should have prayed for help so earnestly—I should have rushed away, as we rush from hideous danger. I feel no excuse for myself—none. I should never have failed towards Lucy and Philip as I have done, if I had not been weak, selfish, and hard—able to think of their pain without a pain to myself that would have destroyed all temptation. O, what is Lucy feeling now? She believed in me—she loved me—she was so good to me. Think of her......"

Maggie's voice was getting choked as she uttered these last words.

"I *can't* think of her," said Stephen, stamping as if with pain. "I can think of nothing but you, Maggie. You demand of a man what is impossible. I felt that once; but I can't go back to it now. And where is the use of *your* thinking of it, except to torture me? You can't save them from pain now; you can only tear yourself from me, and make my life worthless to me. And even if we could go back, and both fulfil our engagements—if that were possible now—it would be hateful—horrible, to think of your ever being Philip's wife—of your ever being

the wife of a man you didn't love. We have both been rescued from a mistake."

A deep flush came over Maggie's face, and she couldn't speak. Stephen saw this. He sat down again, taking her hand in his, and looking at her with passionate entreaty.

"Maggie! Dearest! If you love me, you are mine. Who can have so great a claim on you as I have? My life is bound up in your love. There is nothing in the past that can annul our right to each other: it is the first time we have either of us loved with our whole heart and soul."

"No—not with my whole heart and soul, Stephen," she said, with timid resolution. "I have never consented to it with my whole mind. There are memories, and affections, and longing after perfect goodness, that have such a strong hold on me; they would never quit me for long; they would come back and be pain to me—repentance. I couldn't live in peace if I put the shadow of a wilful sin between myself and God. I have caused sorrow already—I know—I feel it; but I have never deliberately consented to it: I have never said, 'They shall suffer, that I may have joy.' It has never been my will to marry you: if you were to win consent from the momentary triumph of my feeling for you, you would not have my whole soul. If I could wake back again into the time before yesterday, I would choose to be true to my calmer affections, and live without the joy of love."

Stephen loosed her hand, and, rising impatiently, walked up and down the room in suppressed rage.

"Good God!" he burst out, at last, "what a miserable thing a woman's love is to a man's. I could commit crimes for you—and you can balance and choose in that way. But you *don't* love me: if you had a tithe of the feeling for me that I have for you, it would be impossible to you to think for a moment of sacrificing me. But it weighs nothing with you that you are robbing me of *my* life's happiness."

Maggie pressed her fingers together almost convulsively as she held them clasped on her lap. A great terror was upon her, as if she were ever and anon seeing where she stood by

great flashes of lightning, and then again stretched forth her hands in the darkness.

"No—I don't sacrifice you—I couldn't sacrifice you," she said, as soon as she could speak again; "but I can't believe in a good for you, that I feel—that we both feel is a wrong towards others. We can't choose happiness either for ourselves or for another: we can't tell where that will lie. We can only choose whether we will indulge ourselves in the present moment, or whether we will renounce that, for the sake of obeying the divine voice within us—for the sake of being true to all the motives that sanctify our lives. I know this belief is hard: it has slipped away from me again and again; but I have felt that if I let it go for ever, I should have no light through the darkness of this life."

"But Maggie," said Stephen, seating himself by her again, "is it possible you don't see that what happened yesterday has altered the whole position of things? What infatuation is it—what obstinate pre-possession that blinds you to that? It is too late to say what we might have done or what we ought to have done. Admitting the very worst view of what has been done, it is a fact we must act on now; our position is altered; the right course is no longer what it was before. We must accept our own actions, and start afresh from them. Suppose we had been married yesterday? It is nearly the same thing. The effect on others would not have been different. It would only have made this difference to ourselves," Stephen added, bitterly, "that you might have acknowledged then that your tie to me was stronger than to others."

Again a deep flush came over Maggie's face, and she was silent. Stephen thought again that he was beginning to prevail—he had never yet believed that he should *not* prevail, there are possibilities which our minds shrink from too completely for us to fear them.

"Dearest," he said, in his deepest, tenderest tone, leaning towards her and putting his arm round her, "you *are* mine now—the world believes it—duty must spring out of that now: in a few hours you will be legally mine, and those who had

claims on us will submit—they will see that there was a force which declared against their claims."

Maggie's eyes opened wide in one terrified look at the face that was close to hers, and she started up—pale again.

"O, I can't do it," she said, in a voice almost of agony—"Stephen—don't ask me—don't urge me. I can't argue any longer—I don't know what is wise; but my heart will not let me do it. I see—I feel their trouble now; it is as if it were branded on my mind. *I* have suffered, and had no one to pity me; and now I have made others suffer. It would never leave me; it would embitter your love to me. I *do* care for Philip—in a different way; I remember all we said to each other; I know how he thought of me as the one promise of his life. He was given to me that I might make his lot less hard; and I have forsaken him. And Lucy—she has been deceived—she who trusted me more than anyone. I cannot marry you: I cannot take a good for myself that has been wrung out of their misery. It is not the force that ought to rule us—this that we feel for each other; it would rend me away from all that my past life has made dear and holy to me. I can't set out on a fresh life, and forget that: I must go back to it, and cling to it, else I shall feel as if there were nothing firm beneath my feel."

"Good God, Maggie"! said Stephen, rising too and grasping her arm, "you rave. How can you go back without marrying me? You don't know what will be said, dearest. You see nothing as it really is."

"Yes, I do. But they will believe me. I will confess every thing. Lucy will believe me—she will forgive you, and—and—O *some* good will come by clinging to the right. Dear, dear Stephen, let me go!—don't drag me into deeper remorse. My whole soul has never consented—it does not consent now."

Stephen let go her arm, and sank back on his chair, half stunned by despairing rage. He was silent a few moments, not looking at her: while her eyes were turned towards him yearning, in alarm at this sudden change. At last he said, still without looking at her—

"Go, then—leave me—don't torture me any longer—I can't bear it."

Involuntarily she leaned towards him and put out her hand to touch his. But he shrank from it as if it had been burning iron, and said again—

"Leave me."

Maggie walked out of the room: it was like an automatic action that fulfils a forgotten intention. What came after? A sense of stairs descended as if in a dream—of flagstones—of a chaise and horses standing—then a street, and a turning into another street where a stagecoach was standing, taking in passengers—and the darting thought that that coach would take her away, perhaps towards home. But she could ask nothing yet; she only got into the coach.

Home—where her mother and brother were—Philip—Lucy—the scene of her very cares and trials—was the haven towards which her mind tended—the sanctuary where sacred relics lay—where she would be rescued from more falling. The thought of Stephen was like a horrible throbbing pain, which yet, as such pains do, seemed to urge all other thoughts into activity. But among her thoughts, what others would say and think of her conduct was hardly present. Love and deep pity and remorseful anguish left no room for that.

The coach was taking her to York—farther away from home; but she did not learn that until she was set down in the old city at midnight. It was no matter: she could sleep there, and start home the next day. She had her purse in her pocket, with all her money in it—a bank-note and a sovereign—she had kept it in her pocket from forgetfulness, after going out to make purchases the day before yesterday.

Did she lie down in the gloomy bedroom of the old inn that night with her will bent unwaveringly on the path of penitent sacrifice? The great struggles of life are not so easy as that; the great problems of life are not so clear. In the darkness of that night she saw Stephen's face turned towards her in passionate, reproachful misery; she lived through again all the tremulous delight of his presence with her that made existence an easy floating in a stream of joy, instead of a quiet resolved endurance and effort. The love she had renounced came back upon her with a cruel charm; she felt herself opening

her arms to receive it once more; and then it seemed to slip away and fade and vanish, leaving only the dying sound of a deep, thrilling voice that said, "Gone—for ever gone."

THE FINAL RESCUE

Chapter I

THE RETURN TO THE MILL

Between four and five o'clock on the afternoon of the fifth day from that on which Stephen and Maggie had left St. Ogg's, Tom Tulliver was standing on the gravel-walk outside the old house at Dorlcote Mill. He was master there now: he had half fulfilled his father's dying wish, and by years of steady self-government and energetic work he had brought himself near to the attainment of more than the old respectability which had been the proud inheritance of the Dodsons and Tullivers.

But Tom's face, as he stood in the hot still sunshine of that summer afternoon, had no gladness, no triumph in it. His mouth wore its bitterest expression, his severe brow its hardest and deepest fold, as he drew down his hat farther over his eyes to shelter them from the sun, and thrusting his hands deep into his pockets, began to walk up and down the gravel. No news of his sister had been heard since Bob Jakin had come back in the steamer from Mudport, and put an end to all improbable suppositions of an accident on the water by stating that he had seen her land from a vessel with Mr. Stephen Guest. Would the next news be that she was married—or what? Probably that she was not married: Tom's mind was set to the expectation of the worst that could happen—not death, but disgrace.

As he was walking with his back towards the entrance gate, and his face towards the rushing mill-stream, a tall dark-eyed figure, that we know well, approached the gate, and paused to look at him, with a fast-beating heart.

She lifted the latch of the gate and walked in—slowly. Tom did not hear the gate; he was just then close upon the roaring dam; but he presently turned, and, lifting up his eyes, saw the figure whose worn look and loneliness seemed to him a

confirmation of his worst conjectures. He paused, trembling and white with disgust and indignation.

Maggie paused too—three yards before him. She felt the hatred in his face : felt it rushing through her fibres ; but she must speak.

"Tom," she began, faintly," I am come back to you—I am come back home—for refuge—to tell you everything."

"You will find no home with me," he answered with tremulous rage. "You have disgraced us all. You have disgraced my father's name. You have been a curse to your best friends. You have been base—deceitful—no motives are strong enough to restrain you. I wash my hands of you for ever. You don't belong to me."

Their mother had come to the door now. She stood paralysed by the double shock of seeing Maggie and hearing Tom's words.

"Tom," said Maggie, with more courage, "I am perhaps not so guilty as you believe me to be. I never meant to give way to my feelings. I struggled against them. I was carried too far in the boat to come back on Tuesday. I came back as soon as I could."

"I can't believe in you any more," said Tom, gradually passing from the tremulous excitement of the first moment to cold inflexibility. "You have been carrying on a clandestine relation with Stephen Guest—as you did before with another. He went to see you at my aunt Moss's ; you walked alone with him in the lanes ; you must have behaved as no modest girl would have done to her cousin's lover, else that could never have happened. The people at Luckreth saw you pass—you passed all the other places ; you knew what you were doing. You have been using Philip Wakem as a screen to deceive Lucy —the kindest friend you ever had. Go and see the return you have made her : she's ill—unable to speak—my mother can't go near her, lest she should remind her of *you*."

Maggie was half stunned—too heavily pressed upon by her anguish even to discern any difference between her actual guilt and her brother's accusations, still less to vindicate herself.

"Tom," she said, crushing her hands together under her cloak, in the effort to speak again. "Whatever I have done, I repent it bitterly. I want to make amends. I will endure anything. I want to be kept from doing wrong again."

"What *will* keep you?" said Tom, with cruel bitterness. "Not religion; not your natural feelings of gratitude and honour. And he—he would deserve to be shot, if it were not— But you are ten times worse than he is. I loathe your character and your conduct. You struggled with your feelings, you say. Yes! *I* have had feelings to struggle with; but I conquered them. I have had a harder life than you have had; but I have found *my* comfort in doing my duty. But I will sanction no such character as yours; the world shall know that *I* feel the difference between right and wrong. If you are in want, I will provide for you—let my mother know. But you shall not come under my roof. It is enough that I have to bear the thought of your disgrace: the sight of you is hateful to me."

Slowly Maggie was turning away, with despair in her heart. But the poor frightened mother's love leaped out now, stronger than all dread.

"My child! I'll go with you. You've got a mother."

O the sweet rest of that embrace to the heart-stricken Maggie! More helpful than all wisdom is one draught of simple human pity that will not forsake us.

Tom turned and walked into the house.

"Come in my child." Mrs. Tulliver whispered. "He'll let you stay and sleep in my bed. He won't deny that, if I ask him."

"No, mother," said Maggie, in a low tone, like a moan, "I will never go in."

"Then wait for me outside. I'll get ready and come with you."

When his mother appeared with her bonnet on, Tom came out to her in the passage, and put money into her hands.

"My house is yours, mother, always,' he said. "You will

come and let me know everything you want—you will come back to me".

Poor Mrs. Tulliver took the money, too frightened to say anything. The only thing clear to her was the mother's instinct, that she would go with her unhappy child.

Maggie was waiting outside the gate; she took her mother's hand, and they walked a little way in silence.

"Mother," said Maggie at last, "we will go to Luke's cottage. Luke will take me in. He was very good to me when I was a little girl."

"He's got no room for us, my dear, now: his wife's got so many children. I don't know where to go, if it isn't to one o' your aunts; and I hardly durst,' said poor Mrs. Tulliver, quite destitute of mental resources in this extremity.

Maggie was silent a little while, and then said—

"Let us go to Bob Jakin's, mother; his wife will have room for us, if they have no other lodger."

So they went on their way to St. Ogg's—to the old house by the river-side.

Bob himself was at home, with a heaviness at heart which resisted even the new joy and pride of possessing a two months' o'd baby—quite the liveliest of its age that had ever been born to prince or packman.

Mrs. Jakin the larger and Mrs. Jakin the less were commanded to make all things comfortable for "the old Missis and the young Miss"—alas! that she was still "Miss". The ingenious Bob was sorely perplexed as to how this result could have come about—how Mr. Stephen Guest could have gone away from her, or could have let her go away from him, when he had the chance of keeping her with him.

"Bob," she said, after a few moments, looking down at the baby, and holding it anxiously, as if she feared it might slip from her mind and her fingers, "I have a favour to ask of you."

"Don't you speak so, Miss," said Bob, grasping the skin of

Mumps's neck ; "if there's anything I can do for you, I should look upon it as a day's earnings."

"I want you to go to Dr. Kenn's, and ask to speak to him and tell him that I am here, and should be very grateful if he would come to me."

"Eh, Miss—I'd do it in a minute—it is but a step ; but Dr. Kenn's wife lies dead—she's to be buried to-morrow—died the day I came from Mudport. It's all the more pity she should ha' died just now, if you want him, I hardly like to go a-nigh him yet."

"O, no, Bob," said Maggie, "we must let it be—till after a few days, perhaps—when you hear that he is going about again."

Chapter 2

ST. OGG'S PASSES JUDGMENT

It was soon known throughout St. Ogg's that Miss Tulliver was come back : she had not, then, eloped in order to be married to Mr. Stephen Guest—at all events, Mr. Stephen Guest had not married her—which came to the same thing, so far as her culpability was concerned. We judge others according to results ; how else ?—not knowing the process by which results are arrived at. If Miss Tulliver, after a few months of well-chosen travel, had returned as Mrs. Stephen Guest—with a post-marital *trousseau*, and all the advantages possessed even by the most unwelcome wife of an only son, public opinion, which at St. Ogg's, as elsewhere, always knew what to think, would have judged in strict consistency with those results. Public opinion, in these cases, is always of the feminine gender—not the world, but the world's wife : and she would have seen, that two handsome young people—the gentleman of quite the first family in St. Ogg's—having found themselves in a false position, had been led into a course which, to say the least of it, was highly injudicious, and productive of sad pain and disappointment, especially to that sweet young thing, Miss Deane.

Maggie had returned without a *trousseau*, without a husband—in that degraded and outcast condition to which error is well known to lead ; and the world's wife, with that fine instinct

which is given her for the preservation of Society, saw at once that Miss Tulliver's conduct had been of the most aggravated kind. Could anything be more detestable? A girl so much indebted to her friends—whose mother as well as herself had received so much kindness from the Deanes—to lay the design of winning a young man's affections away from her own cousin, who had behaved like a sister to her! Winning his affections? That was not the phrase for such a girl as Miss Tulliver; it would have been more correct to say that she had been actuated by mere unwomanly boldness and unbridled passion. There was always something questionable about her. That connection with young Wakem, which, they said, had been carried on for years, looked very ill—disgusting, in fact! But with a girl of that disposition!—To the world's wife there had always been something in Miss Tulliver's very physique that a refined instinct felt to be prophetic of harm. As for poor Mr. Stephen Guest, he was rather pitiable than otherwise: a young man of five-and-twenty is not to be too severely judged in these cases—he is really very much at the mercy of a designing bold girl. And it was clear that he had given way in spite of himself: he had shaken her off as soon as he could; indeed, their having parted so soon looked very black indeed—*for her.* To be sure, he had written a letter, laying all the blame on himself, and telling the story in a romantic fashion so as to try and make her appear quite innocent: of course he could do that! But the refined instinct of the world's wife was not to be deceived: providentially!—else what would become of Society? Why—her own brother had turned her from his door:—he had seen enough, you might be sure, before he would do that. A truly respectable young man—Mr. Tom Tulliver: quite likely to rise in the world! His sister's disgrace was naturally a heavy blow to him. It was to be hoped that she would go out of the neighbourhood—to America, or anywhere—so as to purify the air of St. Ogg's from the taint of her presence—extremely dangerous to daughters there!

Maggie, all this while, was too entirely filled with a more agonising anxiety, to spend any thought on the view that was being taken of her conduct by the world of St. Ogg's: anxiety

about Stephen—Lucy—Philip—beat on her poor heart in a hard driving, ceaseless storm of mingled love, remorse, and pity.

But she was not without practical intentions: the love of independence was too strong an inheritance and a habit for her not to remember that she must get her bread; and when other projects looked vague, she fell back on that of returning to her plain sewing, and so getting enough to pay for her lodging at Bob's. She meant to persuade her mother to return to the Mill by-and-by, and live with Tom again; and somehow or other she would maintain herself at St. Ogg's. Dr. Kenn would perhaps help her and advise her. She remembered his parting words at the bazaar. She remembered the momentary feeling of reliance that had sprung in her when he was talking with her, and she waited with yearning expectation for the opportunity of confiding everything to him. Her mother called every day at Mr. Deane's to learn how Lucy was: the report was always sad—nothing had yet roused her from the feeble passivity which had come on with the first shock. But of Philip, Mr. Tulliver had learned nothing: naturally, no one whom she met would speak to her about what related to her daughter. But at last she summoned courage to go and see sister Glegg, who of course would know everything, and had even been to see Tom at the Mill in Mrs. Tulliver's absence, though he had said nothing of what had passed on the occasion.

As soon as her mother was gone, Maggie put on her bonnet. She had resolved on walking to the Rectory and asking to see Dr. Kenn.

She was shown up at once, after being announced, into Dr. Kenn's study, where he sat amongst piled-up books, for which he had little appetite, leaning his cheek against the head of his youngest child, a girl of three. The child was sent away with the servant, and when the door was closed, Dr. Kenn said, placing a chair for Maggie,—

"I was coming to see you, Miss Tulliver; you have anticipated me; I am glad you did."

Maggie looked at him with her childlike directness as she had done at the bazaar, and said, "I want to tell you everything." But her eyes filled fast with tears as she said it, and

all the pent-up excitement of her humiliating walk would have its vent before she could say more.

"Do tell me everything," Dr. Kenn said, with quiet kindness in his grave firm voice. "Think of me as one to whom a long experience has been granted, which may enable him to help you."

In rather broken sentences, and with some effort, at first, but soon with the greater ease that came from a sense of relief in the confidence, Maggie told the brief story of a struggle that must be the beginning of a long sorrow. Only the day before, Dr. Kenn had been made acquainted with the contents of Stephen's letter, and he had believed them at once, without the confirmation of Maggie's statement. That involuntary plaint of hers, "O *I must go*," had remained with him as the sign that she was undergoing some inward conflict.

Dr. Kenn was silent for some minutes : there was a difficulty on his mind. He rose, and walked up and down the hearth with his hands behind him. At last he seated himself again, and said, looking at Maggie—

"Your inexperience of the world, Miss Tulliver, prevents you from anticipating fully the very unjust conceptions that will probably be formed concerning your conduct—conceptions which will have a baneful effect, even in spite of known evidence to disprove them."

"O, I do—I begin to see," said Maggie, unable to repress this utterance of her recent pain. "I know I shall be insulted : I shall be thought worse than I am."

"You perhaps do not yet know," said Dr. Kenn with a touch of more personal pity, "that a letter is come which ought to satisfy everyone who has known anything of you, that you chose the steep and difficult path of a return to the right at the moment when that return was most of all difficult."

"Oh—where is he ?" said poor Maggie, with a flush and tremor that no presence could had hindered.

"He is gone abroad ; he has written of all that passed to his father. He has vindicated you to the utmost ; and I hope the communication of that letter to your cousin will have a-

beneficial effect on her."

Dr. Kenn waited for her to get calm again before he went on.

"That letter, as I said, ought to suffice to prevent false impressions concerning you. But I am bound to tell you, Miss Tulliver, that not only the experience of my whole life, but my observation within the last three days, makes me fear that there is hardly any evidence which will save you from the painful effect of false imputations. The persons who are the most incapable of a conscientious struggle such as yours, are precisely those who will be likely to shrink from you; because they will not believe in your struggle. I fear your life here will be attended not only with much pain, but with many obstructions. For this reason – and for this only – I ask you to consider whether it will not perhaps be better for you to take a situation at a distance, according to your former intention. I will exert myself at once to obtain one for you."

"O, if I could but stop here!" said Maggie, "I have no heart to begin a strange life again. I should have no stay. I should feel like a lonely wanderer—cut off from the past. I have written to the lady who offered me a situation to excuse myself. If I remained here, I could perhaps atone in some way to Lucy—to others: I could convince them that I'm sorry. And," she added, with some of the old proud fire flashing out, "I will not go away because people say false things of me. They shall learn to retract them. If I must go away at last, because—because others wish it, I will not go now."

"Well," said Dr. Kenn, after some consideration, "If you determine on that, Miss Tulliver, you may rely on all the influence my position gives me. I am bound to aid and countenance you, by the very duties of my office as a parish priest. I will add, that personally I have a deep interest in your peace of mind and welfare."

"The only thing I want is some occupation that will enable me to get my bread and be independent," said Maggie. "I shall not want much. I can go on lodging where I am."

I must think over the subject maturely," said Dr. Kenn: "and in a few days I shall be better able to ascertain the

general feeling. I shall come to see you: I shall bear you constantly in mind."

Chapter 3

SHOWING THAT OLD ACQUAINTANCES ARE CAPABLE OF SURPRISING US

When Maggie was at home again, her mother brought her news of an unexpected line of conduct in aunt Glegg. As long as Maggie had not been heard of, Mrs. Glegg had half-closed her shutters and drawn down her blinds: she felt assured that Maggie was drowned: that was far more probable than that her niece and legatee should have done any thing to wound the family honour in the tenderest point. When, at last, she learned from Tom that Maggie had come home, and gathered from him what was her explanation of her absence, she burst forth in sévere reproof of Tom for admitting the worst of his sister until he was compelled. If you were not to stand by your "kin" as long as there was a shred of honour attributable to them, pray what were you to stand by? Lightly to admit conduct in one of your own family that would force you to alter your will, had never been the way of the Dodsons; and though Mrs. Glegg had always augured ill of Maggie's future at a time when other people were perhaps less clear-sighted, yet fair-play was a jewel, and it was not for her own friends to help to rob the girl of her fair fame and to cast her out from family shelter to the scorn of the outer world, until she had become unequivocally a family disgrace. The circumstances were unprecedented in Mrs. Glegg's experience—nothing of that kind had happened among the Dodsons before but it was a case in which her hereditary rectitude and personal strength of character found a common channel along with her fundamental ideas of clanship, as they did in her life-long regard to equity in money matters. She quarrelled with Mr. Glegg, whose kindness, flowing entirely into compassion for Lucy, made him as hard in his judgment of Maggie as Mr. Deane himself was; and, fuming against her sister Tulliver because she did not at once come to her for advice and help, shut herself up in her own room with Baxter's *Saint's Rest* from morning till night, denying herself

to all visitors, till Mr. Glegg brought from Mr. Deane the news of Stephen's letter. Then Mrs. Glegg felt that she had adequate fighting ground—then she laid aside Baxter, and was ready to meet all comers.

Your aunt Glegg scolded me so as niver was, my dear," said poor Mrs. Tulliver, when she came back to Maggie, "as I didn't go to her before—she said it wasn't for her to come to me first. But she spoke like a sister, too: *having* she allays was; and hard to please—O dear!—but she's said the kindest word as has ever been spoke by you yet, my child. For she says, for all she's been so set again' having one extry in the house, and making extry spoons and things, and putting her about in her ways, you shall have a shelter in her house, if you'll go to her dutiful, and she'll uphold you against folks as say harm of you when they've no call. And I told her I thought you could'nt bear to see nobody but me, you was so beat down with trouble; but she said, '*I* won't throw ill words at her—there's them out o' th' family 'ull be ready enough to do that. But I'll give her good advice: an' she must be humble.' It's wonderful o' Jane; for I'm sure she used to throw everything I did wrong at me—if it was the raisin wine as turned out bad, or the pies too hot—or whativer it was."

"O mother," said poor Maggie, shrinking from the thought of all the contact her bruised mind would have to bear, "tell her I'm very grateful—I'll go to see her as soon as I can; but I can't see anyone just yet, except Dr. Kenn. I've been to him—he will advise me, and help me to get some occupation. I can't live with anyone, or be dependent on them, tell aunt Glegg; I must get my own bread. But did you hear nothing of Philip—Philip Wakem? Have you never seen anyone that has mentioned him?"

"No, my dear: but I've been to Lucy's, and I saw your uncle, and he says they got her to listen to the letter, and she took notice o' Miss Guest, and asked questions, and the doctor thinks she's on the turn to be better. What a world this is—what trouble, O dear! The law was the first beginning, an' it's gone from bad to worse all of a sudden, just when the luck seemed on the turn." This was the first lamentation that Mrs.

Tulliver had let slip to Maggie, but old habit had been revived by the interview with sister Glegg.

"My poor, poor mother!" Maggie burst out, cut to the heart with pity and compunction and throwing her arms round her mother's neck, "I was always naughty and trouble-some to you. And now you might have been happy if it hadn't been for me."

"Eh, my dear," said Mrs. Tulliver, leaning towards the warm young cheek; I must put up wi' my children—I shall never have no more; and if they bring me bad luck, I must be fond on it—there's nothing else much to be fond on, for my furnitur' went long ago. And you'd got to be very good once; I can't think how it's turned out the wrong way so!"

Still two or three more days passed, and, Maggie heard nothing of Philip; anxiety about him was becoming her pre-dominant trouble.

At last Bob brought her a letter, without a post-mark, directed in a hand which she knew familiarly in the letters of her own name—a hand in which her name had been written long ago, in a pocket Shakespeare which she possessed. Her mother was in the room, and Maggie, in violent agitation, hurried up-stairs, that she might read the letter in solitude. She read it with a throbbing brow.

"Maggie,—I believe in you—I know you never meant to deceive me—I know you tried to keep faith to me, and to all. I believed this before I had any other evidence of it than your own nature. The night after I last parted from you I suffered torments. I had seen what convinced me that you were not free; that there was another whose presence had a power over you, which mine never possessed; but through all the suggestions—almost murderous suggestions—of rage and jealousy my mind made its way to belief in your truthfulness. I was sure that you meant to cleave to me, as you had said; that you had rejected him; that you struggled to renounce him, for Lucy's sake and for mine. But I could see no issue that was not fatal for *you*; and that dread shut out the very thought of resignation. I foresaw that he would not relinquish you, and I believed then, as I believe now, that the

strong attraction which drew you together proceeded only from one side of your characters, and belonged to that partial, divided action of our nature which makes half the tragedy of the human lot. I have felt the vibration of chords in your nature, that I have continually felt the want of in his.

"Then—dear one—in spite of all, you have been the blessing of my life. Let no self-reproach weigh on you because of me. It is I who should rather reproach myself for having urged my feelings upon you, and hurried you into words that you have felt as fetters. You meant to be true to those words; you *have* been true. I can measure your sacrifice by what I have known in only one half-hour of your presence with me, when I dreamed that you might love me best. But, Maggie, I have no just claim on you for more than affectionate remembrance.

"For some time I have shrunk from writing to you because I have shrunk even from the appearance of wishing to thrust myself before you, and so repeating my original error. But you will not misconstrue me. I know that we must keep apart for a long while; cruel tongues would force us apart, if nothing else did. But I shall not go away. The place where you are is the one where my mind must live, wherever I might travel. And remember that I am unchangeably yours: yours—not with selfish wishes—but with a devotion that excludes such wishes.

"God comfort you,—my loving, large-souled Maggie. If everyone else has misconceived you, remember that you have never been doubted by him whose heart recognised you ten years ago.

"Do not believe anyone who says I am ill, because I am not seen out of doors. I have only had nervous headaches—no worse than I have sometimes had them before. But the over-powering heat inclines me to be perfectly quiescent in the day-time. I am strong enough to obey any word which shall tell me that I can serve you by word or deed.

"Yours, to the last,

"Philip Wakem."

Chapter 4

MAGGIE AND LUCY

By the end of the week Dr. Kenn had made up his mind that there was only one why in which he could secure to Maggie a suitable living at St. Ogg's. Even with his twenty years' experience as a parish priest, he was aghast at the obstinate continuance of imputations against her in the face of evidence. Hitherto he had been rather more adored and appealed to than was quite agreeable to him; but now, in attempting to open the ears of women to reason, and their consciences to justice, on behalf of Maggie Tulliver, he suddenly found himself as powerless as he was aware he would have been if he had attempted to influence the shape of bonnets. Dr. Kenn could not be contradicted; he was listened to in silence; but when he left the room, a comparison of opinions among his hearers yielded much the same result as before.

And thus every direction in which Dr. Kenn had turned in the hope of procuring some kind recognition and some employment for Maggie, proved a disappointment to him.

Dr. Kenn, having great natural firmness, began, in the presence of this opposition, as every firm man would have done, to contract a certain strength of determination over and above what would have been called forth by the end in view. He himself wanted a daily governess for his younger children; and though he had hesitated in the first instance to offer this position to Maggie, the resolution to protest with the utmost force of his personal and priestly character against her being crushed and driven away by slander, was now decisive. Maggie gratefully accepted an employment that gave her duties as well as a support: her days would be filled now, and solitary evenings would be a welcome rest. She no longer needed the sacrifice her mother made in staying with her, and Mrs. Tulliver was persuaded to go back to the Mill.

But now it began to be discovered that Dr. Kenn, exemplary as he had hitherto appeared, had his crotchets,—possibly his weaknesses. The masculine mind of St. Ogg's smiled pleasantly, and did not wonder that Kenn liked to see a fine pair of

eyes daily or that he was inclined to take so lenient a view of the past; the feminine mind, regarded at that period as less powerful, took a more melancholy view of the case. If Dr. Kenn should be beguiled into marrying that Miss Tulliver! It was not safe to be too confident even about the best of men; an apostle had fallen and wept bitterly afterwards; and though Peter's denial was not a close precedent, his repentance was likely to be.

Magie had frequent tidings through her mother, or aunt Glegg, or Dr. Kenn, of Lucy's gradual progress towards recovery, and her thoughts tended continually towards her uncle Deane's house; she hungered for an interview with Lucy, if it were only for five minutes—to utter a word of penitence, to be assured by Lucy's own eyes and lips that she did not believe in the willing treachery of those whom she had loved and trusted.

But Lucy was not yet able to go to church, or any place where Maggie could see her; and even the hope of that departed, when the news was told her by aunt Glegg, that Lucy was really going away in a few days to Scarborough with the Miss Guests, who had been heard to say that they expected their brother to meet them there.

She sat without candle in the twilight, with the window wide open towards the river; the sense of oppressive heat adding itself undistinguishably to the burthen of her lot. Seated on a chair against the window, with her arm on the window-sill, she was looking blankly at the flowing river, swift with the advancing tide,—struggling to see still the sweet face in its unreproaching sadness, that seemed now from moment to moment to sink away and be hidden behind a form that thrust itself between, and made darkness. Hearing the open door, she thought Mrs. Jakin was coming in with her supper, as usual; and with that repugnance to trivial speech which comes with languor and wretchedness, she shrank from turning round and saying she wanted nothing: good little Mrs. Jakin would be sure to make some well-meant remarks. But the next moment, without her having discerned the sound of a footstep, she felt a light hand on her shoulder, and heard a voice close to her saying, "Maggie!"

The face was there—changed, but all the sweeter: the hazel eyes were there, with their heart-piercing tenderness.

"Maggie!" the soft voice said. "Lucy!" answered a voice with a sharp ring of anguish in it; and Lucy threw her arms round Maggie's neck, and leaned her pale cheek against the burning brow.

"I stole out," said Lucy, almost in a whisper, while she sat down close to Maggie and held her hand, "when papa and the rest were away. Alice is come with me. I asked her to help me. But I must only stay a little while, because it is so late."

It was easier to say that at first than to say anything else. They sat looking at each other. It seemed as if the interview must end without more speech, for speech was very difficult. Each felt that there would be something scorching in the words that would recall the irretrievable wrong. But soon, as Maggie looked, every distinct thought began to be overflowed by a wave of loving penitence, and words burst forth with a sob.

"God bless you for coming, Lucy."

The sobs came thick on each other after that.

"Maggie, dear, be comforted," said Lucy now, putting her cheek against Maggie's again. "Don't grieve." And she sat still, hoping to soothe Maggie with that gentle caress.

"I didn't mean to deceive you, Lucy," said Maggie as soon as she could speak. "It always made me wretched that I felt what I didn't like you to know......It was because I thought it would all be conquered, and you might never see anything to wound you."

"I know, dear," said Lucy. "I know you never meant to make me unhappy.. ...It is a trouble that has come on us all:—you have to bear more than I have—and you gave him up, when......you did what it must have been very hard to do."

They were silent again a little while, sitting with clasped hands and cheeks leaned together.

"Lucy," Maggie again, "*he* struggled too. He wanted to be true to you. He will come back to you. Forgive him—he will be happy then..."

These words were wrung forth from Maggie's deepest soul, with an effort like the convulsed clutch of a drowning man. Lucy trembled and was silent.

A gentle knock came at the door. It was Alice, the maid, who entered and said—

"I daren't stay any longer, Miss Deane. They'll find it out, and there'll be such anger at your coming out so late."

Lucy rose and said, "Very well, Alice—in a minute."

"I'm to go away on Friday, Maggie," she added, when Alice had closed the door again. "When I come back, and am strong, they will let me do as I like. I shall come to you when I please then."

"Lucy," said Maggie, with another great effort, "I pray to God continually that I may never be the cause of sorrow to you any more."

She pressed the little hand that she held between hers, and looked up into the face that was bent over hers. Lucy never forgot that look.

"Maggie," she said in a low voice, that had the solemnity of confession in it, "you are better than I am. I can't......"

She broke off there, and said no more. But they clasped each other again in a last embrace.

Chapter 5

THE LAST CONFLICT

In the second week of September, Maggie was again sitting in her lonely room, battling with the old shadowy enemies that were for ever slain and rising again. It was past mid-night, and the rain was beating heavily against the window, driven with fitful force by the rushing, loud-moaning wind. For the day after Lucy's visit there had been a sudden change in the

weather: the heat and drought had given way to cold variable winds, and heavy falls of rain at intervals; and she had been forbidden to risk the contemplated journey until the weather should become more settled. In the counties higher up the Floss, the rain had been continuous, and the completion of the harvest had been arrested. And now, for the last two days, the rain on this lower course of the river had been incessant, so that the old men had shaken their heads and talked of sixty years ago, when the same sort of weather, happening about the equinox, brought on the greet floods, which swept the bridge away, and reduced the town to great misery but the younger generation who had seen several small floods, thought lightly of these sombre recollections and forebodings, and Bob Jakin, naturally prone to take a hopeful view of his own luck, laughed at his mother when she regretted their having taken a house by the river-side: observing that but for that they would have had no boats, which were the most lucky of possessions in case of a flood that obliged them to go to a distance for food.

All were in their beds now, for it was past midnight; all, except some solitary watchers such as Maggie. She was seated in her little parlour towards the river with one candle, that left everything dim in the room, except a letter which lay before her on the table.

Two days before Maggie received that letter, she had been to the Rectory for the last time. The heavy rain would have prevented her from going since; but there was another reason. Dr. Kenn at first enlightened only by a few hints as to the new turn which gossip and slander had taken in relation to Maggie, had recently been made more fully aware of it by an earnest remonstrance from one of his male parishioners against the indiscretion of persisting in the attempt to overcome the prevalent feeling in the parish by a course of resistance. Dr. Kenn having a conscience void of offence in the matter, was still inclined to persevere—was still averse to give way before a public sentiment that was odious and contemptible; but he was finally wrought upon by the consideration of the peculiar responsibility attached to his office, of avoiding the appearance of evil.

He made up his mind that he must advise Maggie to go away from St. Ogg's for a time; and he performed that difficult task with as much delicacy as he could, only stating in vague terms that he found his attempt to countenance her stay was a source of discord between himself and his parishioners, that was likely to obstruct his usefulness as a clergyman. He begged her to allow him to write to a clerical friend of his, who might possibly take her into his own family as governess; and, if not, would probably know of some other available position for a young woman in whose welfare Dr. Kenn felt a strong interest.

Poor Maggie listened with a trembling lip: she could say nothing but a faint "thank you—I shall be grateful", and she walked back to her lodgings, through the driving rain, with a new sense of desolation. She must be a lonely wanderer; she must go out among fresh faces, that would look at her wonderingly, because the days did not seem joyful to her; she must begin a new life, in which she would have to rouse herself to receive new impressions—and she was so unspeakably, sickeningly weary! There was no home, no help for the erring; even those who pitied, were constrained to hardness. But ought she to complain?

All the next day she sat in her lonely room, with a window darkened by the cloud and the driving rain, thinking of that future, and wrestling for patience:—for what repose could poor Maggie ever win except by wrestling?

And on the third day—this day of which she had just sat out the close—the letter had come which was lying on the table before her.

The letter was from Stephen. He was come back from Holland: he was at Mudport again, unknown to any of his friends; and had written to her from that place, enclosing the letter to a person whom he trusted in St. Ogg's. From beginning to end, it was a passionate cry of reproach: an appeal against her useless sacrifice of him—of herself; against that perverted notion of right which led her to crush all his hopes.

"They have written to me that you are to marry Kenn. As if I should believe that! Perhaps they have told you some such

fables about me. Perhaps they tell you I have been 'travelling'. My body has been dragged about somewhere ; but *I* have never travelled from the hideous place where you left me—where I started up from the stupor of helpless rage to find you gone.

"Maggie ! whose pain can have been like mine ? Whose injury is like mine ? Who besides me has met that long look of love that has burnt itself into my soul, so that no other image can come there ? Maggie, call me back to you !—call me back to life and goodness ! I am banished from both now. I have no motives : I am indifferent to everything. Two months have only deepened the certainty that I can never care for life without you. Write me one word—say, 'Come !' In two days I should be with you. Maggie—have you forgotten what it was to be together ?—to be within reach of a look—to be within hearing of each other's voice ?"

When Maggie first read this letter she felt as if her real temptation had only just begun. At the entrance of the chill dark cavern, we turn with unworn courage from the warm light ; but how, when we have trodden far in the damp darkness, and have begun to be faint and weary—how, if there is a sudden opening above us, and we are invited back again to the life-nourishing day ? The leap of natural longing from under the pressure of pain is so strong that all less immediate motives are likely to be forgotten—till the pain has been escaped from.

For hours Maggie felt as if her struggle had been in vain. For hours every other thought that she strove to summon was thrust aside by the image of Stephen waiting for the single word that would bring him to her. She did not *read* the letter : she heard him uttering it, and the voice shook her with its old strange power. All the day before she had been filled with the vision of a lonely future through which she must carry the burthen of regret, upheld only by clinging faith. And here—close within her reach—urging itself upon her even as a claim—was another future, in which hard endurance and effort were to be exchanged for easy delicious leaning on another's loving strength ! And yet that promise of joy in the place of sadness did not make the dire force of the temptation to Maggie. It was

Stephen's tone of misery,—it was the doubt in the justice of her own resolve, that made the balance tremble, and made her once start from her seat to reach the pen and paper, and write "Come!"

But close upon that decisive act, her mind recoiled; and the sense of contradiction with her past self in her moments of strength and clearness, came upon her like a pang of conscious degradation. No—she must wait—she must pray—the light that had forsaken her would come again: she should feel again what she had felt when she had fled away, under an inspiration strong enough to conquer agony—to conquer love: she should feel again what she had felt when Lucy stood by her, when Philip's letter had stirred all the fibres that bound her to the calmer past.

She took up the letter, held it to the candle, and let it burn slowly on the hearth. To-morrow she would write to him the last word of parting.

At that moment Maggie felt a startling sensation of sudden cold about her knees and feet: it was water flowing under her. She started up; the stream was flowing under the door that led into the passage. She was not bewildered for an instant—she knew it was the flood!

The tumult of emotion she had been enduring for the last twelve hours seemed to have left a great calm in her: without screaming, she hurried with the candle up-stairs to Bob Jakin's bedroom. The door was ajar; she went in and shook him by the shoulder.

"Bob, the flood is come! it is in the house! let us see if we can make the boats safe."

She lighted his candle, while the poor wife, snatching up her baby, burst into screams; and then she hurried down again to see if the waters were rising fast. There was a step down into the room at the door leading from the staircase: she saw that the water was already on a leval with the step. While she was looking, something came with a tremendous crash against the window, and sent the leaded panes and the old wooden framework inwards in shivers,—the water pouring in after it.

"It is the boat!" cried Maggie. "Bob, come down to get the boats!"

And without a moment's shudder of fear, she plunged through the water, which was rising fast to her knees, and by the glimmering light of the candle she had left on the stairs, she mounted on to the window-sill, and crept into the boat, which was left with the prow lodging and protruding through the window. Bob was not long after her, hurrying without shoes or stockings, but with the lanthorn in his hand.

"Why, they're both here—both the boats," said Bob, as he got into the one where Maggie was. "It's wonderful this fastening isn't broke too, as well as the mooring."

In the excitement of getting into the other boat, unfastening it and mastering an oar, Bob was not struck with the danger Maggie incurred. We are not apt to fear for the fearless, when we are companions in their danger, and Bob's mind was absorbed in possible expedients for the safety of the helpless in-doors. The fact that Maggie had been up, had waked him, and had taken the lead in activity, gave Bob a vague impression of her as one who would help to protect, not need to be protected. She too had got possession of an oar, and had pushed off, so as to release the boat from the overhanging window-frame.

"The water's rising so fast," said Bob, "I doubt it'll be in the chambers before long—th' house is so low. I've more mind to get Prissy and the child and the mother into the boat, if I could, and trusten to the water—for th' old house is none so safe. And if I let go the boat...but *you,*" he exclaimed, suddenly lifting the light of his lanthorn on Maggie, as she stood in the rain with the oar in her hand and her black hair streaming.

Maggie had no time to answer, for a new tidal current swept along the line of the houses, and drove both the boats out on to the wide water, with a force that carried them far past the meeting current of the river.

In the first moments Maggie felt nothing, thought of nothing, but that she had suddenly passed away from that life which she had been dreading: it was the transition of death,

without its agony—and she was alone in the darkness with God.

The whole thing had been so rapid—so dream-like—that the threads of ordinary association were broken : she sank down on the seat clutching the oar mechanically, and for a long while had no distinct conception of her position. The first thing that waked her to fuller consciousness, was the cessation of the rain, and a perception that the darkness was divided by the faintest light, which parted the overhanging gloom from the immeasurable watery level below. She was driven out upon the flood :—that awful visitation of God which her father used to talk of—which had made the nightmare of her childish dreams. And with that thought there rushed in the vision of the old home—and Tom—and her mother—they had all listened together.

"O God, where am I? Which is the way home?" she cried out, in the dim loneliness.

What was happening to them at the Mill? The flood had once nearly destroyed it. They might be in danger—in distress : her mother and her brother, alone there, beyond reach of help! Her whole soul was strained now on that thought; and she saw the long-loved faces looking for help into the darkness, and finding none.

She was floating in smooth water now—perhaps far on the over-flooded fields. There was no sense of present danger to check the out-going of her mind to the old home : and she strained her eyes against the curtain of gloom that she might seize the first sight of her whereabout—that she might catch some faint suggestion of the spot towards which all her anxieties tended.

She must get her boat into the current of the Floss, else she would never be able to pass the Ripple, and approach the house : this was the thought that occurred to her, as she imagined with more and more vividness the state of things round the old home. But then she might be carried very far down, and be unable to guide her boat out of the current again. For the first time distinct ideas of danger began to press upon her; but there was no choice of courses, no room for hesitation, and she floated into the current. Swiftly she went now, with-

out effort; more and more clearly in the lessening distance and the growing light she began to discern the objects that she knew must be the well-known trees and roofs; nay, she was not far off a rushing muddy current that must be the strangely altered Ripple.

Great God! there were floating masses in it, that might dash against her boat as she passed, and cause her to perish too soon. What were those masses?

For the first time Maggie's heart began to beat in an agony of dread. She sat helpless—dimly conscious that she was being floated along—more intensely conscious of the anticipated clash. But the horror was transient: it passed away before the oncoming warehouse of St. Ogg's: she had passed the mouth of the Ripple, then: *now*, she must use all her skill and power to manage the boat and get it if possible out of the current. She could see now that the bridge was broken down: she could see the masts of a strained vessel far out over the watery field. But no boats were to be seen moving on the river—such as had been laid hands on were employed in the flooded streets.

With new resolution, Maggie seized her oar, and stood up again to paddle; but the now ebbing tide added to the swiftness of the river, and she was carried along beyond the bridge. She could hear shouts from the windows overlooking the river, as if the people there were calling to her. It was not till she had passed on nearly to Tofton that she could get the boat clear of the current. Then with one yearning look towards her uncle Deane's house that lay farther down the river she took both her oars and rowed with all her might across the watery fields, back towards the Mill. Colour was beginning to awake now, and as she approached the Dorlcote fields she could discern the tints of the trees—could see the old Scotch firs far to the right, and the home chestnuts—Oh! how deep they lay in the water: deeper than the trees on this side the hill. And the roof of the Mill—where was it? Those heavy fragments hurrying down the Ripple—what had they meant? But it was not the house—the house stood firm; drowned up to the first story, but still firm—or was it broken in at the end towards the Mill?

With panting joy that she was there at last—joy that overcame all distress, Maggie neared the front of the house. At

first she heard no sound ; saw no object moving. Her boat was on a level with the up-stairs windows. She called out in a loud piercing voice.

"Tom, where are you ? Mother, where are you ? Here is Maggie !"

Soon, from the window of the attic in the central gable, she heard Tom's voice :

"Who is it ? Have you brought a boat ?"

"It is I, Tom—Maggie. Where is mother ?"

"She is not here : she went to Garum, the day before yesterday. I'll come down to the lower window."

"Alone, Maggie ?" said Tom, in a voice of deep astonishment, as he opened the middle window on a level with the boat.

"Yes, Tom : God has taken care of me, to bring me to you. Get in quickly. Is there no one else ?"

"No," said Tom, stepping into the boat. "I fear the man is drowned : he was carried down the Ripple, I think, when part of the Mill fell with the crash of trees and stones against it : I've shouted again and again, and there has been no answer. Give me the oars, Maggie."

It was not till Tom had pushed off and they were on the wide water—he face to face with Maggie—that the full meaning of what had happened rushed upon his mind. It came with so overpowering a force—it was such a new revelation to his spirit, of the depths in life, that had lain beyond his vision which he had fancied so keen and clear—that he was unable to ask a question. They sat mutely gazing at each other : Maggie with eyes of intense life looking out from a weary, beaten face—Tom pale with a certain awe and humiliation. Thought was busy though the lips were silent : and though he could ask no question, he guessed a story of almost miraculous divinely-protected effort. But at last a mist gathered over the blue, grey eyes, and the lips found a word they could utter : the old childish—"Magsie !"

Maggie could make no answer but a long deep sob of that mysterious wondrous happiness that is one with pain.

As soon as she could speak, she said, "We will go to Lucy, Tom : we'll go and see if she is safe, and then we can help the rest."

Tom rowed with untired vigour, and with a different speed from poor Maggie's. The boat was soon in the current of the river again, and soon they would be at Tofton.

"Park House stands high up out of the flood," said Maggie. "Perhaps they have got Lucy there."

Nothing else was said ; a new danger was being carried towards them by the river. Some wooden machinery had just given way on one of the wharves, and huge fragments were being floated along. The sun was rising now, and the wide area of watery desolation was spread out in dreadful clearness around them—in dreadful clearness floated onwards the hurrying, threatening masses. A large company in a boat that was working its way along under the Tofton houses, observed their danger, and shouted, "Get out of the current !"

But that could not be done at once, and Tom, looking before him, saw death rushing on them. Huge fragments, clinging together in fatal fellowship, made one wide mass across the stream.

"It is coming, Maggie !" Tom said, in a deep hoarse voice, loosing the oars, and clasping her.

The next instant the boat was no longer seen upon the water —and the huge mass was hurrying on in hideous triumph.

But soon the keel of the boat reappeared, a black speck on the golden water.

The boat reappeared—but brother and sister had gone down in an embrace never to be parted : living through again in one supreme moment, the days when they had clasped their little hands in love, and roamed the daisied fields together.

Conclusion

Nature repairs her ravages—repairs them with her sunshine, and with human labour. The desolation wrought by that flood had left little visible trace on the face of the earth, five years after. The fifth autumn was rich in golden corn-stacks, rising

in thick clusters among the distant hedge-rows; the wharves and warehouses on the Floss were busy again, with echoes of eager voices, with hopeful lading and unlading.

And every man and woman mentioned in this history was still living—except those whose end we know.

Nature repairs her ravagas—but not all. The uptorn trees are not rooted again; the parted hills are left scarred: if there is a new growth, the trees are not the same as the old, and the hills underneath their green vesture bear the marks of the past rending. To the eyes that have dwelt on the past, there is no thorough repair.

Dorlcote Mill was rebuilt. And Dorlcote churchyard,—where the brick grave that held a father whom we know, was found with the stone laid prostrate upon it after the flood,—had recovered all its grassy order and decent quiet.

Near that brick grave there was a tomb erected, very soon after the flood, for two bodies that were found in close embrace, and it was visited at different moments by two men who both felt that their keenest joy and keenest sorrow were for ever buried there.

One of them visited the tomb again with a sweet face beside him—but that was years after.

The other was always solitary. His great companionship was among the trees of the Red Deeps, where the buried joy seemed still to hover—like a revisiting spirit.

The tomb bore the names of Tom and Maggie Tulliver, and below the names it was written—

"In their death they were not divided."

THE END

NOTES

BOOK I

BOY AND GIRL

Book I—CHAPTER 1

OUTSIDE DORLCOTE MILL

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Gist and Critical Note: This chapter introduces us to the river Floss and to its tributary, the Ripple. We also become acquainted with Dorlcote Mill which stood on the banks of the Floss. A passing reference is made to the town of St. Ogg's. A reference is made also to the little girl, (Maggie Tulliver) who was fond of going to the riverside and watching the flow of water. This first chapter is written in the form of a reverie. In other words, the novelist in her imagination sees the river Floss, Dorlcote Mill, the town of St. Ogg's, and the little girl (Maggie Tulliver) standing by the riverside.

Page 1. *impetuous embrace*—forceful or vigorous meeting.

the dark glitter of coal—the dark lustre of coal.

wharves—plural of "wharf." A wharf is a place on the river-side where ships are loaded and unloaded.

transient—short-lived.

The tributary Ripple—a tributary is a smaller river that joins a larger one. The Ripple is the name of a tributary which flowed into the large river Floss.

placid—peaceful.

Page 2. *that little girl*—a reference here is made to Maggie Tulliver who is the heroine of the novel.

I have been pressing my elbows on the arms of my chair and dreaming—This is the reverie into which the novelist has fallen. The first chapter is written in the form of a reverie.

parlour—a small sitting room in a house.

Book I—CHAPTER 2

MR. TULLIVER, OF DORLCOTE MILL, DECLARES HIS RESOLUTION ABOUT TOM

Gist and Critical Note : This chapter introduces us to the owner of Dorlcote Mill. He is Mr. Edward Tulliver. We also meet Mrs. Tulliver. Mr. Tulliver is talking about his plans regarding the education of his son Tom. Tom is studying at an academy. Mr. Tulliver now wants to send him to a place where Tom can receive a better type of education. Mr. Tulliver tells his wife that he will consult Mr. Riley, an auctioneer and arbitrator, about Tom's education. Mr. and Mrs. Tulliver also discuss their daughter Maggie. Mr. Tulliver is proud that Maggie has taken after his family and is very 'cute. Mrs. Tulliver, however, considers Maggie a naughty and spoiled child. Maggie's hair, which does not curl easily, is especially a cause of annoyance to Mrs. Tulliver. There are several touches of humour in this chapter. The humour proceeds from the conjugal relations of Mr. and Mrs. Tulliver.

Page 2. *eddication*—education.

th'—the.

'ud ha'—would have.

schoolin'—schooling.

learning'—learning.

scholard—scholar.

O'—of.

wi'—with.

raskil—rascal.

vallyer—valuer ; one who assesses the value of property.

I've—I have.

Page 3. *sanguinary*—revengeful.

forrards—forwards.

iver—ever.

Page 4. *He might have a mole somewhere out o' sight*—He might have a mole on some part of the body that is not exposed to view. (Notice the unconscious humour here.)

summat—somewhat.

an uncommon puzzling thing—Mr. Tulliver finds life a puzzling affair. He thinks that talking is puzzling work. He thinks that selecting a school for his son is a puzzling thing.

Bessy—short for "Elizabeth".

Page 5. *wench*—girl.

calkilate—calculate.

'cute—acute ; clever.

un—one.

ah, I thought so—wandering up and down by the water, like a wild thing ; she'll tumble in some day—Mr. Tulliver here expresses the fear that Maggie will fall into the river some day and get drowned. Here is an example of what is known as tragic irony. In the end, the river does swallow Maggie. Mrs. Tulliver's remark here is, therefore, a vague anticipation of what is to happen ultimately. On two other occasions subsequently, Mr. Tulliver expresses the same fear. The river is already becoming a symbol of Maggie's doom.

gell—girl. *Bedlam creatur'*—a person in a lunatic asylum. *Mulatter*—mullato ; the child of one white and one black parent.

Book I – CHAPTER 3

MR. RILEY GIVES HIS ADVICE CONCERNING A SCHOOL FOR TOM

Gist and Critical Note : In this chapter we learn that in his dispute with Dix about the dam, Mr. Tulliver wins through Mr. Riley's arbitration. Mr. Tulliver expresses his hatred for the lawyer, Wakem, who was supporting Dix. Mr. Tulliver takes Mr. Riley's advice regarding Tom's education. Mr. Riley suggests that Mr. Tulliver should send Tom to a priest by the name of Mr. Stelling who lives at King's Lorton about fifteen

miles away. Mr. Stelling would prove some-what costly for Mr. Tulliver's means, but Mr. Tulliver is bent upon giving a good education to Tom and, therefore, he accepts Mr. Riley's proposal. Mr. Tulliver's decision about Tom's education introduces a complication into the story. This chapter contains Mr. Tulliver's and Mr. Riley's views on education.

Page 7. *bonhomie*—a spirit of fellowship : friendliness.

Page 8. *Old Harry*—an expression used to mean the Devil. It was Mr. Tulliver's belief that lawyers had been created by the Devil. This belief was based upon Mr. Tulliver's hatred of the lawyer, Wakem. *terrier*—a kind of dog. *scholard*—scholar. *Ladyday*—25th March.

Page 9. *"I believe you," said Mr. Tulliver, winking..."afore I've lost my teeth"*—In this speech Mr. Tulliver states his object in educating Tom. He does not want Tom to become a miller like himself. He wants to put Tom to business so that Tom should have an independent income of his own when he grows up. Mr. Tulliver does not want that his son should drive him out of Dorlcote Mill during his old age. Mr. Tulliver would like to keep possession of Dorlcote Mill till he dies. For this reason he wants that Tom, after receiving his education, should take up a different business.

allays—always.

Page 10. *and understand 'em better nor half the folks*—In this sentence and many other sentences of colloquial speeches in this book, the word "nor" means "than". *Topsy turvy*—upside down.

it's an uncommon puzzlin' thing—This remarks is quite characteristic of Mr. Tulliver. Several times in the course of the story, Mr. Tulliver expresses the view that this world and everything in it is "puzzling."

Page 11. *sententiously*—briefly and wisely.

parson—clergyman.

Page 13. **Explanation with reference to the context** : *For there is nothing more widely misleading than sagacity if it happens to get on a wrong scent....................to waste its energy on imaginary gain* : These lines are taken from George Eliot's novel, *The*

Mill On The Floss. The novelist makes this observation in connection with Mr. Riley's advice to Mr. Tulliver to send his son Tom to Mr. Stelling for education. Mr. Riley, we are told, made this recommendation to Mr. Tulliver not from any selfish motives. By the manner in which Mr. Riley talked, a sagacious observer might have come to the conclusion that Mr. Riley was thinking of some personal advantage. But the novelist tells us that sagacity may often go wrong. A man who is too sagacious generally thinks that people speak and act from selfish motives. But, according to the novelist, a sagacious man will be wasting his time and energy in trying to investigate such personal motives because it is not always personal motives which prompt a human being to act and speak in a certain manner.

sagacity—shrewdness.

Explanation with reference to the context : *Plotting covetousness and deliberate contrivance..................and clumsily improvised insinuations*—These lines are taken from George Eliot's novel, *The Mill On The Floss.* In these lines, the novelist has made an observation about human nature. This observation is made by the novelist in connection with Mr. Riley's advice to Mr. Tulliver to send his son Tom to Mr. Stelling for education. Mr. Riley did not have any selfish motive in making his recommendation. But a too sagacious observer, after listening to the talk of Mr. Riley, might have come to the conclusion that Mr. Riley in making his recommendation had some personal advantage in view. In this connection, the novelist points out that people in their every-day life are not generally prompted by selfish motives of profit. Human beings are generally too lazy to hatch plots to harm others or to benefit themselves. Plotters, schemers, and intriguers are found more in books than in real life. Without deliberately forming plans and schemes, it is possible for a human being to do a lot of harm to his neighbour. A man may destroy the peace of mind of his neighbour by very small things done intentionally or unintentionally. A man may injure another by small lies and falsehoods, by small acts of dishonesty, by misplaced flattery or by veiled criticism. In such cases, therefore, it is not necessary for a man to chalk

out a deliberate programme of injuring others or benefiting himself.

covetousness—greed.

contrivance—forming schemes or hatching plots.

Book I—CHAPTER 4

TOM IS EXPECTED

Gist and Critical Note : In this chapter Maggie's feeling in respect of Tom's expected return home from the academy are described. She wanted to accompany her father to the academy when he went to bring Tom home. But the morning being wet, her mother did not allow her to go. Maggie feels miserable and, climbing up to the attic, sobs and weeps in her distress. A little later she goes out of the house and has a brief conversation with Luke, the head miller. Her distress is increased when she learns that Tom's rabbits are dead. Tom had entrusted her with the care of those rabbits but she had neglected them completely. She knows that Tom would be angry with her. This chapter shows Maggie's great devotion to Tom as well as her impulsiveness.

Page 15. *Fetish*—Here the word is used for a large doll which Maggie used to punish whenever she was miserable. When Maggie was in great distress, she would drive a nail into the doll.

vicarious suffering—suffering experienced on behalf of some-one else.

Pythoness—witch.

Yap—this is the name of a dog.

Page 16. *He's an offal creature*—He is an awful creature.

primises—premises.

He remembers nothing but his own inside—His only interest in life is eating. (There is a touch of humour in the remark.)

Book I—CHAPTER 5

TOM COMES HOME

Gist and Critical Note : Tom arrives. Mrs. Tulliver and Maggie are delighted to see him. Maggie clings to Tom and does not easily release him from her embrace. Tom tells her that he has brought a fishing line for her and one for himself. When he learns that his rabbits have died for want of proper care, he scolds her angrily and says that he can no longer love her. Maggie begins to cry because these words are very painful to her. She apologises to Tom for having neglected his rabbits. But Tom again scolds her. She feels so grieved that she runs into the house and takes refuge in her favourite attic. She feels very wretched and miserable. She cannot understand why Tom is so cruel to her when she loves him so much. After two or three hours, Tom comes up to her and asks her to go down with him. Maggie rushes towards him and clings around his neck, sobbing. Tom gives her some cake to eat. The next morning, Tom and Maggie go to the Round Pool for fishing. Maggie is extremely happy in Tom's company. Whenever Tom is in an affectionate mood he calls her "Magsie". Maggie succeeds in hooking a fish and Tom is pleased with her. This chapter throws a lot of light upon the temperaments of Maggie and Tom and upon child psychology in general.

Page 16. *fluttering heart*—a heart beating with eagerness and hope.

Page 17. *reticence*—reserve ; silence.

with masculine reticence as to the tender emotions—Tom, being a boy, could exercise greater control over his feelings of affection and love than his mother and sister could.

stodgy—heavy.

Page 18. *spitfire*—ill-tempered person.

cross—angry.

Page 19. *I gave Spouncer a black eye*—Tom tells his sister that he gave a good thrashing to one of his school-fellows.

"*To give one a black eye*"—to hit somebody so hard as to cause the skin around the eye to look black.

Samson—name of an exceptionally strong man whose story in narrated in the Bible. Samson was deceived by his mistress Delilah who learnt from him that all his strength lay in his hair.

Page 23. Explanation with reference to the context : *We learn to restrain ourselves when we get older.........of a highly civilized society*—These lines are taken from George Eliot's novel *The 'Iill On The Floss*. In these lines, the novelist makes one of her numerous comments on human nature. According to the novelist, children become quickly reconciled to each other after a quarrel. In this respect, children are more or less like the lower animals who do not remember their quarrels. As human beings grow older, their quarrels leave a mark upon their minds. Grown-up people do not easily forget their quarrels. A man, after having quarrelled with another, will show his resentment by words and by actions. He does not make an immediate effort to be reconciled with the person with whom he has quarrelled. On the contrary, both sides maintain a firm attitude of aloofness from each other. Inwardly, of course, both parties feel the desire for reconciliation but they try to hide this desire. Inwardly, they both feel upset and perturbed but outwardly each behaves as if he does not bother about the other. There is no such complex in the behaviour of children and the lower animals. This complex is a mark of a highly civilized state of society. The novelist has made this observation in connection with the relations of Tom and Maggie during their childhood. If Tom got annoyed with Maggie for some reason, Maggie would soon seek reconciliation with her brother, thus showing that quarrels of children do not leave a deep mark on their minds.

Book I—CHAPTER 6

THE AUNTS AND UNCLES ARE COMING

Gist and Critical Note : It is Easter week. It has been decided to invite Mrs. Tulliver's sisters and their husbands to a family party and to obtain their opinion regarding the plan to send Tom to Mr. Stelling for education. Mr. Tulliver wanted his own sister and her husband (Mr. and Mrs. Moss) also to come to the party. But Mrs. Tulliver says that her sisters and his

sister do not suit well together. Mrs. Tulliver is very proud of the Dodson family from which she comes. The Dodson family had its own traditions about what was right and what was wrong. The members of this family thought themselves to be above other families of the same social status. Aunt Glegg and Aunt Pullet have no children of their own. Aunt Deane has a daughter Lucy. It was understood, therefore, that Aunt Glegg and Aunt Pullet would leave some legacy to Tom and Maggie. The day before the Aunts and Uncles arrive, Mrs. Tulliver prepares excellent pastries, cakes, jellies, etc. Tom and Maggie take plenty of these delicacies from the kitchen and divide these between themselves. The division of the cake leads to some misunderstanding in the mind of Tom. He thinks Maggie to be greedy. He expected her to offer him a part of her own share, but it did not occur to Maggie to do so. Tom goes away to play with a fellow called Bob Jakin. Maggie feels miserable at Tom's behaviour. Tears flow from her eyes plentifully. Maggie does not have a good opinion about Bob. But Tom is fond of Bob's company. Bob always knows, on seeing an egg, which bird's it is ; he can catch wasps ; he can climb trees ; and he can do a number of other things quite fascinating to Tom. But on this occasion Tom and Bob fall out with each other. Tom feels that Bob has tried to cheat him. Being an honest lad, Tom cannot reconcile himself to any cheating on the part of Bob. On a previous occasion, Tom had given a pocket knife to Bob as a present. On a later date, as we shall see, Bob would make an adequate return for this pocket knife. Bob, later on, will provide much humour in the book and will prove very helpful to Tom and Maggie. Cheating apart, Bob will appear to us an excellent fellow.

In this chapter we get some information about the aunts and uncles whom we shall meet in the next chapter. We learn that neither Tom nor Maggie likes their aunts and uncles who think them to be naughty children. We also learn the characteristics of the Dodson family from which Mrs. Tulliver has come. Some more light is thrown on the relations between Tom and Maggie. Tom gets annoyed with Maggie over little things. But Maggie is very devoted to her brother. We also meet in this chapter a

boy called Bob Jakin who, later in the novel, provides a lot of unconscious humour.

Page 25. *propitious*—favourable ; helpful.

lief—willingly.

leggicy—legacy ; the amount of money left by someone to a friend or relation or servant and to be paid after his death.

even a sheep will face about a little when she was lambs—Even a sheep looks proud when she has given birth to lambs. Similarly a woman feels proud when she has given birth to children. It is a well-known fact that a woman who is incapable of bearing children suffers from an inferiority complex.

nevvies—nephews.

gell—girl.

Page 26. *cowslip wine*—wine made from cowslips. The cowslip is a beautiful and fragrant flower.

curing the hams—drying and salting ham in order to preserve it. Ham is the flesh of a hog or pig.

social demeanour—social behaviour.

condiments—spices and pickles, etc., used at the table to lend flavour to the food.

Page 27. *epitome*—miniature ; a short summary.

small-beer—weak beer ; here used for a weak-minded person.

innovator—one who introduces new schemes.

aroma—smell.

marauders—invaders.

Page 28. *bandy*—a kind of game very similar to hockey.

exerting her hypothetical powers—exerting her powers of supposition.

pudden—pudding.

interjection—exclamation.

puff—a kind of pastry.

exasperation—irritation ; annoyance.

Page 29. *crossly*—angrily.

contend—quarrel.

relish—enjoyment

Spouncer—name of a classmate of Tom at Jacob's academy.

inneuendo—a taunting remark.

alacrity—promptness.

Note : The incident of the division of the cake which is described in this chapter throws a lot of light on child psychology.

yet the excellent dog.........quite generously—Note the humour here. Later in the novel, we shall have more humour in connection with Bob Jakin's dog whose name was Mumps.

Page 31. *unmerited reproach*—undeserved rebuke.

palate—taste ; capacity for enjoying eatables.

obtuse—blunt.

brindled dog—a dog having spots and streaks on its body.
tomtit, yellowhammer—kinds of birds.

hedgehog—a small prickly-blacked quadruped so called from living in hedges and bushes and its resemblance to a hog or pig.

stoat—a kind of weasel.

incognito—unrecognised.

Page 31. *refashioning*—remoulding.

Noah's ark—the boat used by Noah. The Bible tells the story of how God sent a huge flood to drown the sinful human beings and how he saved Noah and his family by warning them about the flood and directing them to take the necessary precautions for their safety. Noah put all his family into a boat when the flood came. He also put into that boat a pair of each kind of animal and bird.

Page 32. *peremptorily*—in a tone of authority and finally.

Tom's blood was thoroughly up—Tom was furious.

impunity—a feeling of security.

tenacity—a firm hold.

throttling—strangling.

sulkily—irritably.

Page 33. *I hate a cheat*—Notice Tom's love of honesty at this early age. He never gave up his honesty when he grew up.

relinquish—give up.

Book I—CHAPTER 7

ENTER THE AUNTS AND UNCLES

Gist : It had been decided to consult the aunts and uncles regarding Mr. Tulliver's proposal to send Tom to Mr. Stelling for schooling. Accordingly, Mr. and Mrs. Glegg, Mr. and Mrs. Pullet, and Mr. and Mrs. Deane assemble at Mr. Tulliver's house. Mr. and Mrs. Moss have been left out deliberately, because it was agreed beeween Mr. and Mrs. Tulliver that his and her kinsfolk could not mix together harmoniously. Mrs. Glegg is a bullying kind of woman. Tom and Maggie do not like any of these aunts and uncles, but they dislike Mr. Glegg the most. Maggie's rough aud unruly hair is the subject of much criticism in this company. Maggie is rebuked by her mother, as on previous occasions, for neglecting the care of her hair. Maggie is greatly upset by this criticism and scolding. She rushes upstairs, takes out a large pair of scissors from a drawer, and cuts her hair short. Tom helps her in cutting the hair at her request, though he also warns her about the consequences. With her hair cut short, Maggie looks ridiculous and Tom begins to laugh at her. Tom's laughing hurts Maggie deeply. When eventually Maggie comes downstairs, everybody is astonished to see the strange figure that she presents. Everybody scolds her but her father takes her side and that is a great comfort to her. Mr. Tulliver, then, unfolds his plan to send Tom for schooling to Mr. Stelling. The uncles and aunts disapprove of the proposal because they think that this educational experiment would be too costly for Mr. Tulliver. Mrs. Glegg is particularly annoyed

by the proposal. But Mr. Tulliver sticks to the proposition. He says that his son's education is his affair and that he does not need anybody's advice in the matter. Mrs. Glegg reminds Mr. Tulliver of the loan of five hundred pounds which he still owes to her. She says that it would not be proper on his part to squander money on his son's education. Mr. Tulliver retorts that he has been regularly paying to her interest on the loan. Mrs. Glegg gets very angry because of Mr. Tulliver's attitude. She leaves Mr. Tulliver's house in a state of much agitation and indignation.

Critical Note : This is a very interesting chapter because we get an opportunity of studying the peculiarities of the uncles and aunts. There is a lot of humour arising from the peculiarities of these characters. Even the quarrel between Mr. Tulliver and Mrs. Glegg affords us much humour. Besides the humorous element in this chapter, we have the bitter sorrow of Maggie when, in a fit of anger, she cuts her hair short.

Page 33. *comely*—handsome ; attractive.

forrard—forward.

peevish—irritable.

mild peevish—mildly irritable.

Note : The fault-finding nature of Mrs. Glegg is quite evident from her very first speech.

chaise—a kind of carriage.

mantle—cloak.

rhetoric—art of delivering speeches.

It isn't the glass this time—Last time Mr. Pullet had cried when her toilet glass was broken. This time she is crying over the death of someone. Indeed, Mrs. Pullet is always ready with her tears.

Page 35. *dropsy*—a kind of disease which results in the accumulation of water in some part of the body.

Note the over-sentimentality of Mrs. Pullet and her morbid interest in disease.

remonstrance—protest.

upbraided—rebuked.

Page 36. *tete-a-tete*—conversation ; chat.

sallowest—palest.

gell—girl.

Page 38. Note the novelist's humorous description of Mrs. Deane.

contour—the outlines of the body.

spurring—encouraging ; stimulating.

Page 39. The incident of Maggie's cutting her hair short shows her impulsive and rebellious nature.

mane—the hair growing on the neck of a horse or a pony.

shears—scissors.

Page 40. *Spitfire*—an ill-tempered person.

hussy—a contemptuous term for a girl or a woman.

lacerating—cutting ; painful.

reproof—rebuke.

denunciation—sharp criticism.

transient—short-lived.

you'd catch it—you will be punished for it.

ignominy—disgrace.

wench—girl.

parson—priest.

Page 42. *maze*—complexity ; something bewildering and perplexing.

tenacity—firmness ; rigidity.

taking a pinch—taking a pinch of snuff ; taking suff was as common in those days as smoking is now-a-days.

highish nations—superior ideas.

nettled—feeling embarrassed ; feeling upset.

judiciously—sensibly ; wisely.

missiles—weapons.

Page 44. *things are coming to a fine pass*—things are taking a strange or awkward turn.

if she kept her place—if she were not to forget her position ; if she were not to become rude or insolent.

Note. This quarrel between Mr. Tulliver and Mrs. Gleeg is one of the most amusing incidents in the novel.

Book I—CHAPTER 8

MR. TULLIVER SHOWS HIS WEAKER SIDE

Gist : This chapter contains a very pathetic scene, the scene between Mr. Tulliver and his sister Gritty (Mrs. Moss). Mrs. Tulliver had been feeling disturbed by the way Mrs. Glegg had left the house. She now asks her husband what he would do if Mrs. Glegg were to demand her money back. Mr. Tulliver says that he has no desire to remain in a state of indebtedness to that woman and that if the money were demanded back he would manage to pay it. Of course, he has no cash in hand and a loan would be difficult to obtain without mortgaging the mill and the house which he said he would never mortgage. His freehold land is already under mortgage for two thousand pounds and he is making half-yearly payments to get it released. Mr. Moss owes him three hundred pounds for which he holds a promissory note. He now decides to go to his brother-in-law and ask for the repayment of the loan because he has made up his mind to pay off Mrs. Glegg. Accordingly, he calls at his sister's house and demands the money. But when he hears his sister's tale of financial woes, his brotherly feelings are deeply touched and he tells his sister that she need not worry about the money. The thought has crossed his mind that if he were hard upon his sister, it might somehow tend to make Tom hard upon Maggie at some distant day. Thus his love and anxiety for Maggie (the little wench) arouse in him a deeper affection for his sister, Gritty (Mrs. Moss).

Critical Note : The dialogue between Mr. Tulliver and Mrs. Moss is, indeed, very touching. We also have some humour in this chapter when a reference is made to the large

number of children that Mrs. Moss had borne, and her regret over the death of the twins who had not survived. Mrs. Moss, we are told, believed that poor people should not mind being snubbed. She did not "take her stand on the equality of the human race."

Page 46. *plaintive*—mournful.

Garum Firs—the name of the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Pullet.

Page 47. *dispassionate*—calm and impartial.

skein—a coil or length of thread.

a skein is tangled—This is a metaphysical way of saying that a situation has become complicated.

fallacious—false.

plethoric—suffering from plethora, a kind of disease.

apoplexy—a kind of disease.

Page 48. *Our friend Mr. Tulliver......by having a eighth baby*—Notice the humour here.

Note : The incident of Mr. Tulliver's visit to his sister's house is very pathetic. But the element of humour is not absent even from this incident.

Page 49. *fagged*—exhausted ; extremely tired.

arbour—a shady resting-place in a garden.

with something like a snarl in his tone—in a grumbling, irritable tone.

Page 50. *fortin*—fortune.

Mrs. Moss had eight children, but never overcome her regrei that the twins had not lived—Note the humour here.

unimpeachable—unquestionably correct.

a new sensibility towards his sister—a new affection towards his sister.

Note Mr. Tulliver's reasons for not pressing his brother-in-law for the repayment of the loan.

Book I—CHAPTER 9

TO GARUM FIRS

Gist : This chapter deals with the visit of Mrs. Tulliver to Garum Firs on the following day. Mrs. Tulliver takes her children, Tom and Maggie, for tea to Garum Firs where Mr. and Mrs. Pullet live. At Maggie's special request, Mr. and Mrs. Deane, had on the previous day, allowed their daughter Lucy to stay behind with Maggie at the house of the Tullivers. Now Lucy is also to accompany Mrs. Tulliver and her children to Garum Firs. The day begins ill with Maggie. In the first place, a hair-dresser is summoned to put Maggie's hair in order. Secondly, she quarrels with Tom because Tom pays more attention to Lucy than to her. Tom and Lucy play at building card-houses. Tom makes wonderful card-houses. Lucy is also clever at this game. Maggie, however, does not have much skill at this game. Tom calls her stupid and says he would have been happier if Lucy, instead of Maggie, had been his sister. A little later, Tom calls Lucy to look at a bird's nest without caring to show it to Maggie. Then he peels a willow switch for Lucy and for himself without offering one to Maggie. All this greatly hurts Maggie. Then they all arrive at Garum Firs, the house of Mr. and Mrs. Pullet. Uncle Pullet is very fond of lozenges, peppermints and sweet cakes of which he offers some to the children. Uncle Pullet has a musical snuff-box which he plays to the great delight of the children. Mrs. Pullet takes this opportunity to show her best bonnet to Mrs. Tulliver, at the same time becoming sentimental over it. The children then go out of doors to play while Mrs. Tulliver speaks to her sister Mrs. Pullet about her anxiety at sister Glegg's having taken offence at her husband's behaviour. Mrs. Pullet replies that the fault was that of Mr. Tulliver. She adds that Tom and Maggie also have taken after Mr. Tulliver, the boy being very mischievous and the girl being rude and naughty. Mrs. Pullet then agrees to visit Mrs. Glegg and make an effort to soften Mrs. Glegg towards the Tulliver family.

Critical Note : In this chapter the home of the Pullets is described and we learn a little more about the life of Mr. and Mrs. Pullet. The oversentimentality of Mrs. Pullet and her

vanity about her bonnet are emphasised. Maggie's craving for Tom's love and Tom's callousness towards Maggie are also emphasised in this chapter. Maggie's childhood-suffering is an important element in this novel and this element is conspicuous in this particular chapter.

Page 52. *exasperating*—annoying ; troublesome.

tucker—a piece of cloth tucked or drawn over the bosom, worn by women and children.

peevishly—irritably.

Page 53. *pagoda*—a kind of temple ; here a temple built with cards.

Page 54. Note Aunt Pullet's anxiety that her sister's children should not spoil the rugs in her house is quite amusing.

a great treat—something very enjoyable.

Page 55. *bonnet*—a covering for the head worn by women, without a brim, tied on by strings.

sparse—few ; not plentiful.

Page 56. *acumen*—insight.

missis—Mrs.

irksome—tedious and troublesome.

constraint—restraint.

tete-a-tete—conversation ; chat.

mollycoddle—an effeminate or weak-minded fellow.

Page 58. Note the ironical manner in which the novelist talks about Mr. Pullet's musical snuff-box which was Mr. Pullet's only claim to distinction. Mr. Pullet minus the musical snuff-box would be a complete nullity (*i.e.*, a person of no significance at all).

heighten—increase.

warbling—singing a melody.

choir—a group of singers, generally singing religious songs.

inexplicable—that which cannot be explained.

disapprobation—disapproval.

Page 59. *throw into perspective*—throw into its proper place.

recurred—occurred again.

rhubarb—a plant the leaf stalks of which are much used in cooking and the root in medicine.

Note Mr. Pullet's memory for medicines and his anxiety to administer the various medicines to his wife at proper hours.

Page 60. Note the importance that Mrs. Pullet attaches to doctors. Respectability demands sending for a doctor whenever one feels any physical discomfort.

physic bottles—medicine bottles.

bolus—a large pill.

Book I—CHAPTER 10

MAGGIE BEHAVES WORSE THAN SHE EXPECTED

Gist : While Mrs. Tulliver and Mrs. Pullet have been talking, the children have been playing out-doors. Tom has been paying all his attention to Lucy. Maggie, therefore, has been feeling jealous of her cousin. Tom has been quite harsh towards Maggie and, in fact, asked her not to go with him and Lucy. Maggie was so stung by Tom's attitude that in a fit of jealousy she pushed the neatly dressed Lucy into mud. Lucy lay in the mud crying helplessly. Tom gave Maggie two slaps on the arm and then ran to pick up Lucy. Tom now brings Lucy to the house where the matter is reported to Mrs. Pullet and Mrs. Tulliver. Mrs. Pullet comments adversely upon her sister's children, and Mrs. Tulliver feels distressed. As Maggie has not returned to the house, Tom is sent to look for her. Maggie is nowhere to be found. Tom says that she might have gone home. Mrs. Tulliver feels torn by anxiety and, cutting her visit short, returns home to make sure if Maggie has already reached there.

Critical Note : This chapter again shows Maggie's great devotion to, and affection for, Tom. Tom's attentions to Lucy make Maggie very jealous. Her pushing Lucy into the mud

shows Maggie's impulsive nature. Lucy's gentle and submissive nature is also indicated here because she does not in any way retaliate, but cries helplessly.

Page 61. *unprecedented*—unparalled ; unusual.

apparition—shape ; figure ; spirit ; strange-looking person.

Page 62. *Medusa*—a monster with hissing snakes growing from the head instead of hair.

cross—angry.

to pet—to fondle ; to caress.

Tom's contemptuous conception of a girl—It was Tom's view that girls were inferior to boys.

Page 64. *misdemeanour*—misconduct.

Book I—CHAPTER 11

MAGGIE TRIES TO RUN AWAY FROM HER SHADOW

Gist : Maggie had not been able to tolerate Tom's indifference and cruelty towards her. She, therefore, made up her mind to run away to the gypsies and never see Tom again and the rest of her relatives who always found fault with her. Accordingly, before Tom is sent to look for her, she has already gone away from that place. She wanders to a place where she finds a group of gypsies sitting around a fire. It is already evening. The gypsies receive her well and give her something to eat as she is very hungry, but not the food to which she is accustomed. A kind of fear of gypsies now begins to rise in her heart. She suddenly begins to feel homesick. She tells the gypsies that she wants to go home. She is placed on a donkey, and one of the gypsies goes with her to leave her at her house. She sobs with joy when she sees her father on horse-back. She tells her father in the midst of her sobs that she would never run away from home again.

Critical Note : This chapter gives further information about Maggie's temperament and character. She cannot tolerate injustice and cruelty, especially from Tom. As a protest, she takes the bold step of running away to the gypsies.

Her feeling home-sick among the gypsies is perfectly characteristic of a child of her age. A glimpse into the life of gypsies is also given to us in this chapter. Indeed, Maggie who had different ideas about the life of the gypsies feels quickly disillusioned.

page 66. *common*—a tract of open land.

Appollyon—the destroyer ; Satan.

kindred—kinsfolk ; relatives.

diabolical—devilish.

preternatural—supernatural ; awful.

genial—friendly ; amiable.

Page 67. *blighting*—destructive.

obloquy—criticism.

coaxing—persuasive.

deference—respect.

pritty—pretty.

Page 68. *odorous*—having an odour or smell.

sphinxes—puzzling creatures ; persons whom we cannot understand.

placid—peaceful ; calm.

victual—food.

bacon—the meat of a pig.

Page 69. *scowl*—to wrinkle the brows ; to indicate annoyance.

skewer—a pan of wood or iron for keeping meat in form while roasting.

platters—plates.

urchin—boy.

sauciness—rudeness ; impertinence.

tremor—trembling.

rap—a light blow.

pacific—inclined towards peace.

deferential—respectful.

Page 70. *stew*—boiled meat.

amenable to instruction—susceptible to instruction; capable of being taught; responsive to teaching.

tarts—a tart is a small pie containing baked fruit or jelly.

illusory—deceptive.

Apollyon—the destroyer; Satan.

Page 71. *nightmare*—a horrible experience or dream.

thwacking—striking heavily.

efface—rub off.

Book I—CHAPTER 12

MR. AND MRS. GLEGG AT HOME

Gist: Mr. Glegg had been a wool-stapler but has now retired from active business. He spends much of his time at his hobby of gardening. He had married a woman who agrees with his fundamental idea of life, namely, the need of the strictest economy. He feels much troubled by the quarrel between his wife and Mr. Tulliver. Otherwise also, Mr. Glegg thinks his wife to be a very unreasonable and "contrary" woman. Mrs. Glegg on her side is annoyed with her husband for not having taken her side in the quarrel with Mr. Tulliver. After a sharp exchange of words with her husband, Mrs. Glegg ultimately agrees to act upon her husband's suggestion that she should not demand her five hundred pounds from Mr. Tulliver.

Critical Note: This is one of the most amusing chapters in the book. It describes the conjugal relations of Mr. and Mrs. Glegg. The characters of Mr. and Mrs. Glegg have been very humorously delineated. Of course, neither of them is aware that there is in them anything to laugh at. Indeed, the oddities of both Mr. and Mrs. Glegg provide a lot of entertainment. But, strictly speaking, this chapter has nothing to do with the main plot.

Page 72. *Wool-stapler*—a dealer in wool.

caterpillars, slugs—kinds of insects.

Page 73. *"contrariness" of the female mind*—unreasonableness of women.

Explanation with reference to the context: *That a creature made.........early chapters of Genesis*—These lines are taken from George Eliot's novel *The Mill On The Floss* and refer to the relations between Mr. and Mrs. Glegg. Mr. Glegg always felt greatly upset by the unreasonablness of his wife. His wife bullied him, in spite of the fact that he maintained her in a most respectable manner, tried to flatter her whenever possible, yielded to her demands and whims, and spared no pains to keep her satisfied. In spite of all this, Mrs. Glegg always snapped at her husband and made cutting remarks to him. In view of this strange behaviour of his wife, Mr. Glegg came to the conclusion that all women had the same nature. But he wondered why women should be so irrational. The Bible teaches us that God created woman from man's rib. A woman must, therefore, be inferior to man. And yet Mrs. Glegg tried to dominate her husband. Mr. Glegg, therefore, studied the early chapters of the Bible to solve this mystery. He wanted to know if the Bible could give him any clue as to why women were so unreasonable.

Page 74. *genealogical*—genealogy is the science of family history.

out of man's rib—This is a reference to the Biblical account that God created Eve from Adam's rib. Adam was the first man created by God, and Eve was the first woman.

blandest—most flattering.

Genesis—the name of one of the books of the Bible. Genesis contains an account of how God created the universe.

skinflint—a very miserly person.

turnpike—a gate set across a road to stop carriages or vehicles for the purpose of collecting toll.

inalienable habit—a habit which cannot be shed; a chronic habit.

Page 75. *sulk*—to feel irritated or annoyed or displeased.

facetiousness—a mood of joking.

coarses language—vulgar language.

equils—equals.

sarcasm—a taunting remark.

Page 77. *gruel*—a thin food made by boiling oat-meal in water.

Baxter—an eminent Non-Conformist divine of the 17th century; suffered imprisonment for his religious views; wrote *The Saint's Everlasting Rest* and other books.

parenthetic hint—a hint inserted into the main talk.

magnanimously—large-heartedly; generously.

corollary—a conclusion derived from the main proposition.

protracted—prolonged.

Book I—CHAPTER 13

MR. TULLIVER FURTHER ENTANGLES THE SKIEN OF LIFE

Gist: Mrs. Glegg conveys a message to Mr. Tulliver that he need not bother about returning her money to her. At the same time Mr. Tulliver has sent a letter to Mrs. Glegg that he will repay the loan in the course of the next month. Mr. Tulliver being determined to pay off Mrs. Glegg, he obtains a loan from a person from whom he should not have obtained it, namely, a client of Wakem's.

Critical Note: In this chapter we again see Mr. Tulliver's obstinacy. Instead of treating his quarrel with Mrs. Glegg as a closed matter, especially when she has sent him a conciliatory message, he obtains a loan from another party to pay off Mrs. Glegg. In this way Mr. Tulliver brings about another complication in his life.

Page 78. *entangles the skein of life*—makes his life more complicated.

mediation—bringing about a compromise.

speak civil—speak politely.

magnanimity—large-heartedness ; generosity.

Page 79. *entailed*—necessitated.

Mr. Tulliver had a destiny as well as Oedipus—Oedipus is the subject of a famous myth of ancient Greece. He was told by an oracle that he would slay his father and marry his mother. He tried his utmost to avoid these possibilities but failed. His destiny proved too strong for him and he actually killed his father and then married his mother. Of course, he did both these acts unintentionally. This myth is the subject of several plays by ancient Greek dramatists.

BOOK II

SCHOOL TIME

Book II—CHAPTER I

TOM'S FIRST HALF

Gist : Tom is put under the charge of Rev. Walter Stelling at King's Lorton. During the first quarter of his stay there, Tom is rather unhappy. He finds that his life has become complicated with Latin grammar and Euclid's geometry. Mr. Stelling is quite severe with Tom about his lessons. Mr. Stelling soon comes to the conclusion that Tom does not have an aptitude for the understanding of abstract things. He finds that Tom's brain is not very receptive to etymology and geometrical demonstrations. Apart from his studies, Tom has to look after Laura, the small daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Stelling. During this period, Maggie comes to see Tom and stays in Mr. Stelling's house for a fortnight. Maggie is quite impressed by the learned books that Tom has to read, but she finds that Tom has not made much progress with his studies. Maggie's stay for a fortnight proves a great comfort to Tom and he misses her greatly when she is gone.

Critical Note : This chapter acquaints us with the lack of high mental calibre in Tom and his inaptitude for the understanding of abstract things. We here recall Mr. Tulliver's words that Tom was slow of thinking. Mr. Tulliver's estimate of his son was correct. Tom's feeling of shyness and home-sickness are quite characteristic of a boy of his age. We also have in this chapter a portrayal of Mr. Stelling's character and an account of his educational theory.

Page 80. *made all the more obscure by a thin mist of bashfulness*—Tom's studies were made more difficult by reason of his shyness.

ease of address—speaking and talking without the least shyness or awkwardness.

jocose—jocular ; light-hearted ; inclined to make jokes.

Page 81. *Eton grammar*—the book of grammar prescribed at Eton. Eton was the name of a public school. Mr, Stelling used that particular book to teach grammar to his pupil, Tom.

idiocy—stupidity.

impervious to etymology and geometrical demonstrations—unable to understand the derivation of words and unable to understand geometrical demonstrations. Etymology is that branch of learning which deals with the origin or derivation of words.

Delectus—an elementary text-book for the study of Greek or Latin.

declensions and conjugations—terms in grammar.

salutary—beneficial ; welcome.

cherub—angel.

Page 82. *parsonage*—a house where the parson or the priest lives.

Euclid—Euclid's geometry. Euclid was the name of an ancient geometrician.

Page 84. *mortified*—felt ashamed.

Page 85. *this small apparatus of shallow quickness*—This phrase is humorously used for Maggie who claimed a quick understanding of everything but whose knowledge was actually very shallow at that time.

Book II—CHAPTER 2

THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS

Gist : The dreary half-year at school ends and Tom returns home for the Christmas holidays. During Christmas, Tom's father is in a state of ill-temper. Mr. Tulliver is having trouble with Mr. Pivart. Mr. Pivart has bought farm land higher up the river and is taking measures for its irrigation which means

an infringement on Mr. Tulliver's legitimate share of water-power for his mill. It seems to Mr. Tulliver that he will have to go to law for a decision in his favour. Mr. Pivart is being backed and supported by a rascally lawyer by the name of Wakem. Mrs. Tulliver tries to dissuade her husband from going to law but that only hardens his resolution.

Critical Note : The shadow of a misfortune in the life of the Tulliver family now appears on the horizon. Mr. Tulliver is swiftly moving to his doom. Mrs. Tulliver's effort to dissuade her husband from going to law shows her common sense. Mr. Tulliver's determination to go to law shows his buffalow-headedness and obstinacy. Mr. Tulliver becomes sullen and irritable on account of his quarrel with Mr. Pivart and the lawyer, Wakem.

Page 86. *irate*—irritable.

espoused his father's quarrels—Tom always took his father's side in any quarrel with another man.

to espouse—to support ; to take the side of.

adversary—opponent.

the feeble auxiliary—a weak supporter.

Old Harry—This expression is used for the Devil.

Page 87. *but I'll Pivart him*—but I will teach Mr. Pivart a lesson.

erigations—irrigation.

egg him on—instigate him ; excite him.

raskil—rascal.

Page 88. *prolific woman*—a woman who gives birth to many children.

Page 89. *domineer*—to dominate or to bully.

Book II—CHAPTERS 3 & 4

THE NEW SCHOOL FELLOW AND "THE YOUNG IDEA"

Gist : Tom's holidays come to an end and he goes back to school at King's Lorton. During the first half year, Tom was Mr. Stelling's only pupil. But now Tom finds a companion.

This is a boy called Philip, the son of the lawyer, Wakem. Philip is a hunchback, having met with an accident in his childhood. Philip seems to know a lot more than Tom does. Philip had already finished his course of Latin grammar, mathematics and Greek before coming to Mr. Stelling. He also knows how to draw and he can tell wonderful fighting stories. Tom receives much help from Philip in his studies and shows an all-round improvement. The smooth relations between Tom and Philip are, however, interrupted by a quarrel over a trifling matter. Both use unpleasant words but Tom's language is very insulting. They have had quarrels before also, but this one seems difficult to make up. Tom secures a sword from the village school master who has been giving him lessons in drill. He hides the sword under the bed because he is very anxious to show it to Maggie on her next visit to King's Lorton.

Critical Note: A new character is now introduced into the story, namely, Philip, the hunch-backed boy. Philip's intellectual excellence is sharply contrasted with Tom's inaptitude for various branches of learning. Philip's hump, however, necessarily gives him a feeling of physical inferiority ; as a result of which he has to swallow the insult offered to him by Tom. The relations between Tom and Philip, and Tom's care not to become very intimate with Philip, are skilfully described. We also meet the village school master who is an ex-soldier and who fought in the Peninsular War.

Page 91. *timid*—lacking in courage.

Page 92. *his deformity was more conspicuous when he walked*—Philip's hump became more prominent when he walked.

repugnance—a feeling of hatred and disgust.

anatomist—one who studies the structure of the body.

physiognomist—one who studies the expressions on the face.

congenital hump—hump which dates from the time of birth.

Page 93. *oh my buttons*—an exclamation of surprise.

Page 95. *Saladin*—Sultan of Egypt and Syria; leader of the Saraeens in the third Crusade. (1138—1193).

Robert Bruce—Bruce, the King of Scotland, who fought many battles against the English for the liberation of Scotland.

to shuffle through his lessons—to go through his lessons without fully understanding them.

Page 96. *Peninsular soldier*—a soldier who had fought in the Peninsular War.

The Duke of Wellington—(1769—1852); the Commander-in-chief of the Peninsular Army; won many victories against the French and defeated Napoleon at Waterloo.

General Wolfe—(1727—1759); famous English General who distinguished himself in Canada in the war against the French.

Page 98. *slammed the door after him*—shut the door with a bang.

Page 99. *scrupulous conscientiousness*—utmost care and sense of duty.

Book II—CHAPTER 5

MAGGIE'S SECOND VISIT

Gist: Maggie comes on another visit to her brother. She thinks Philip a nice boy. She tells Tom that it is not Philip's fault that he is the son of a wicked father. Tom takes out the sword from its hiding-place in order to show it to Maggie. He indulges in a bit of sword-play and injures himself in the foot rather badly.

Critical Note: This chapter marks the beginning of Maggie's association with Philip. Maggie develops a liking for Philip whom Tom does not like. Maggie greatly appreciates Philip's sympathy for Tom during the latter's illness.

Page 99. *breach*—quarrel leading to the breaking off of mutual relations.

natural antipathy of temperament—a natural opposition of temperaments ; a natural dissimilarity of temperaments.

transition– change.

malignity—malice ; ill will.

petting—fondling.

Page 100. *coaxing tone*—a tone in which one tries to induce, or prevail upon, another ; persuasive tone.

corrugation– a frowning or wrinkling of the face.

Book II–CHAPTER 6

A LOVE SCENE

Gist : Tom is now confined to bed with his foot injury. Maggie looks after him and nurses him. Sometimes Philip also comes in to enquire about Tom's health. In response to Tom's request, Philip relates stories to him. Maggie is also greatly interested in Philip's stories. Before Maggie leaves for home, she has become quite attached to Philip and he has become very fond of her. She has even given him a kiss. But Tom and Philip do not become close friends. Tom still thinks of Philip as a queer fellow, a hunchback and the son of a rogue.

Critical Note : In this chapter we see the temperamental affinity between Maggie and Philip which leads to a deep attachment between them. The contrast between Tom and Maggie is fully brought out in so far as Tom shares his father's hatred for the Wakem family while Maggie feels drawn towards Philip in spite of the serious dispute between her father and Philip's father. We also see that Philip does his best to cultivate the friendship of Tom who, however, is not responsive.

Page 102. *privation*–misery.

in the sense of a lot irremediably hard—a feeling that his hard lot could not be remedied or improved.

This intimation of a possibility she had not thought of before—This hint that there was a possibility of Tom becoming permanently lame had not occurred to her.

Page 103. *alluded to it*—referred to it.

He winced under her pity—Her pity caused him much pain.

The friendly warmth that had been coupled with pity and gratitude died out by degrees and left them in their old relation to each other—With the passing of days, Tom became more and more indifferent towards Philip. During Tom's illness Philip had shown a lot of interest in Tom, and Tom had greatly appreciated Philip's sympathy and help. But now Tom began to forget Philip's kindness and sympathy with the result that the friendship which had arisen between them cooled off.

Book II—CHAPTER 7

THE GOLDEN GATES ARE PASSED

Gist : Time passes and Tom goes on to the fifth half-year. He is now sixteen. Maggie has been receiving her education at Miss Furnis's boarding school in the old town of Laceham situated on the banks of the river Floss. Her cousin Lucy is also there. The law-suit between Mr. Tulliver and Mr. Pivart has begun. Wakem is Pivart's lawer. Even Maggie now realizes that there can be no question of any intimacy with Philip again. The very name of Wakem makes her father angry. One day, to Tom's great surprise, Maggie arrives at King's Lorton most unexpectedly. She tells Tom that their father has lost the case against Mr. Pivart. The consequences would be most terrible. Mr. Tulliver in a frenzy of grief has fallen down from his horse and has been stricken with paralysis. Tom feels heart-broken and decides to leave the school immediately.

Critical Note : This chapter contains a very pathetic situation. Mr. Tulliver's defeat in the law-suit and the stroke of paralysis which he suffers are a major domestic tragedy. Our hearts go out in sympathy to Maggie and Tom in this family crisis. It is one of the most moving chapters in the book.

Page 104. *Reprehensible*—fit to be condemned.

Wakem, as the agent at once of Pivart and Old Harry—Wakem was the lawyer whom Mr. Pivart had engaged against Mr. Tulliver. Thus Wakem was Mr. Pivart's agent. At the

same time, Mr. Tulliver looked upon Wakem as an evil-minded fellow and as the agent of the Devil. Old Harry stands for the Devil.

Page 105. *Mr. Jacob's academy*—the academy which was being run by Mr. Jacob and which Tom had attended before going to King's Lorton.

diffidence—a feeling of hesitation and shyness.

exultant feeling—a feeling of joy and jubilation.

the prospect of home—the future possibility of going home.

gig—a small carriage.

Page 107. *the golden gates of their childhood*—the happy period of childhood.

BOOK III

THE DOWNFALL

CHAPTER I

WHAT HAD HAPPENED AT HOME

Gist : What really broke the spirit of Mr. Tulliver was not the fact that he had lost the law-suit but the fact that Mr. Furley with whom Mr. Tulliver's property was mortgaged had transferred the mortgage to Wakem. Mr. Tulliver now lies unconscious, though he has brief intervals of consciousness during which he can recognize only his daughter, Maggie. Mrs. Tulliver sends for her sisters and their husbands. The uncles and aunts have a general feeling that a judgment has fallen on Mr. Tulliver for his recklessness and heedlessness.

Critical Note : In this chapter we have an account of the circumstances that led to Mr. Tulliver's collapse and the stroke of paralysis that he suffered. Pathos is the key-note of this chapter also, although we cannot escape the feeling that Mr. Tulliver is himself to blame for the misfortune that has befallen him. The novelist makes a rather sharp comment on the obstinacy and contrariness of Mr. Tulliver. The attitude of the uncles and aunts, as was expected, is unsympathetic and almost callous.

Page 108. *A rush of projects in his brain*—a large number of plans and schemes which entered his mind.

attorney—lawyer.

Page 109. *alacrity*—promptness.

sneak—a mean fellow who hides his real motives.

that he would never be beholden to his wife's friends—that he would never like to have a feeling of obligation towards his wife's friends and relations.

Explanation with reference to the context : *It is mostly the proudest and the most obstinate men........ and must begin life anew :* These lines are taken from George Eliot's novel *The Mill On The Floss* and contain one of her numerous observations about human nature. These lines relate to Mr. Tulliver, who was a very proud and obstinate man. The novelist says that men who are too proud and too obstinate generally shift their position and contradict themselves in an abrupt manner. Such persons, even when defeated in some enterprise, will refuse to admit that they have been defeated. Instead of admitting defeat, such persons will shift their position to show that they have not been defeated. Thus they deceive themselves at the same time as they deceive others. Mr. Tulliver used to say that he would never incur the obligation of his wife's sisters. But, when there was a danger of his furniture being sold away, he consoled himself with the thought that his wife's sister, Mrs. Pullet, would come to their rescue and save the furniture from being sold away. Thus Mr. Tulliver shifted his position and contradicted himself.

Page 110. *regal robes*—royal garments.

chronicler—story-teller ; historian.

tenacity of position—fixity of position.

after a single wrench—after a single act of violence.

predominance—a position in which one can dominate over others.

Explanation with reference to the context : *There are certain animals....................predominate still.* These lines are taken from George Eliot's novel *the Mill On The Floss* and contain one of her numerous comments on human nature in general. The novelist tells us that there are certain animals who suffer from an inflexibility. Such animals cannot survive if any violence is done to the fixity of their position. Likewise, there are certain human beings who by their temperament and nature feel an urge to dominate over others. Such people cannot bear the thought of defeat. Even when defeated, these persons will persist in thinking that they have not been defeated. If they suffer any disgrace or humiliation, they will obstinately refuse to believe that there has been any disgrace. The moment such

persons feel compelled to recognize a defeat or a humiliation, they collapse. This was the case with Mr. Tulliver also. Even when he had lost the law-suit, he persisted in thinking that he could still redeem his position. But once the real situation was forced upon his mind, he collapsed.

Page 111. *much straitened for money*—facing a great difficulty about money.

and there was a general family sense that a judgment had fallen on Mr. Tulliver, which it would be an impiety to counteract by too much kindness— The uncles and aunts did not feel much sympathy for Mr. Tulliver. On the contrary, they thought that Mr. Tulliver had been punished by God for his recklessness and indiscretions. They, therefore, believed that it would be improper for them to show too much kindness to Mr. Tulliver, because any kindness shown to Mr. Tulliver would be contrary to the will of God.

Book III—CHAPTER 2

MRS. TULLIVER'S TERAPHIM, OR HOUSEHOLD GODS

Gist : Mrs. Tulliver feels much distressed by the thought that all her family belongings and goods will be sold by auction because her husband would be declared bankrupt. She cannot bear the thought of losing her household effects, especially her beloved china and linen. In fact, she makes too much fuss about her cups and saucers, her table-cloths and her other articles and indulges in a lot of foolish, sentimental talk about these household possessions.

Critical Note : This chapter is half-pathetic and half-comic. While we do feel sympathy with the Tulliver family because of the impending auction of their household goods, we feel greatly amused by the silly manner in which Mrs. Tulliver laments her misfortune. Her profuse talk about her china, her table-cloths and her other possessions and the self-pity that she feels at the thought of losing these articles, are more a source of humour than a basis for any sympathy in the reader's mind. She does not feel so troubled by the thought of her husband's serious condition as by the thought of losing her household

possessions. Maggie scolds her for her excessive anxiety about the china, the table-cloths, etc.

Page 111. *teraphim*—household gods; gods whom a family worships. Here the reference is to the linen, the china and other household goods over which Mrs. Tulliver makes so much fuss.

Page 112. *mute wretchedness*—silent misery.

To think o' these cloths as I spun myself.....it never shows well when the dishes are on it—In this speech Mrs. Tulliver expresses her deep-rooted sentiments regarding the table-cloths which are going to be auctioned. In fact, Mrs. Tulliver makes too much fuss over her household possessions. In talkativeness, Mrs. Tulliver seems to be only next to Bob Jakin in this novel.

Page 113. *was touched to the quick*—was greatly offended or hurt.

bailies—bailiff; a court official whose function is to realize debts.

chany—china; cups and saucers, and dishes and plates.

niver—never.

Page 114. *And her anger on her father's account was heightened by some egoistic resentment at Tom's silent concurrence with her mother in shutting her out from the common calamity*—While Mrs. Tulliver talks glibly about her china and her table-cloths, putting all the blame on her husband, Maggie feels irritated with her mother for her mother's reproaching her father. At the same time she feels that her mother is talking only to Tom and ignoring her completely. Tom, too, seems to ignore her. For this reason, Maggie feels all the more annoyed. Her sense of her own importance receives a blow because of the indifference of both Tom and Mrs. Tulliver.

heightened—increased.

egoistic resentment—a feeling of anger caused by a blow to one's own sense of importance.

concurrence—consent.

her mother's habitual depreciation of her—her mother had a habit of speaking about Maggie in a tone of condemnation.

to depreciate—to disparage.

Book III—CHAPTER 3

THE FAMILY COUNCIL

Gist : A family council is held to decide what should be done. The aunts and uncles speak in a very patronising manner but none of them is prepared to do anything substantial to relieve the financial distress of the Tulliver family. The aunts and uncles insist that Mr. and Mrs. Moss be asked to repay the amount of three hundred pounds which they owe to Mr. Tulliver. But Tom and Maggie oppose this suggestion, saying that their father would never like the idea of demanding that amount from Mr. and Mrs. Moss because of their straitened circumstances. Mrs. Moss, having heard about the misfortune that has befallen her brother's family, also arrives.

Critical Note : The character of the uncles and aunts is further revealed and their callousness is emphasised. Mrs. Moss is the only kinswoman who feels a genuine sympathy for her brother's family but she is much too poor to be able to relieve their distress. We see the devotion of Tom and Maggie to their aunt, Mrs. Moss, when they stoutly resist the proposal to demand from Mrs. Moss the three hundred pounds which Mr. Moss owes to Mr. Tulliver. We greatly appreciate the firmness of Tom and Maggie in this matter. The half-patronizing and half-contemptuous attitude of Mrs. Glegg towards the Tulliver family is also to be noted.

Page 115. *Ethiopians*—the people of Ethiopia or Abyssinia.

Homer—the great ancient Greek poet who wrote the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

Explanation with reference to the context : *The people who live at a distance are naturally less faulty..............Homer calls them*

blameless—These lines are taken from George Eliot's novel *The Mill On The Floss* and contain one of the numerous generalizations about human nature that the novelist makes in the course of the story. These lines contain, of course, a truth which cannot be denied. It is natural for us to find fault with people who live close to us or with whom we come into daily contact. People who live far away from us or who do not come into frequent contact with us will escape our fault finding. The novelist illustrates this truth with reference to Homer's use of the word "blameless" for the people of Ethiopia. Homer was a Greek. Ethiopia is situated far away from Greece. There was in Homer's time no contact between the Greeks and the Ethiopians. Thus the Greeks had no opportunity of studying the character of the people of Ethiopia. That is the reason why Homer, a great poet, considered the Ethiopians to be "blameless." If Homer had the opportunity of coming into close contact with the Ethiopians, he would certainly have found fault with them and would thus have changed his opinion about them.

compendious—comprehensive ; brief but covering a wide range.

Mrs. Pullet entered crying, in a compendious mood at all times........ the particular case before her—This is a humorous reference to Mrs. Pullet's habit of shedding profuse tears at the least provocation. Her shedding tears was, in fact, a clue to her philosophy of life. She was an over-sentimental woman, ready to shed tears at the first sign of misfortune.

"Best things" ! Mrs. Glegg with severity........ be humble in your mind"—This is a characteristic speech by Mrs. Glegg who speaks in a patronising and at the same time haughty manner. Mrs. Glegg makes no secret of her belief that the Tulliver family is completely ruined. She speaks in a most callous and blunt manner regarding the misfortune of her sister, Mrs. Tulliver.

Page 116. *allusion*—reference.

Book III—CHAPTER 4

A VANISHING GLEAM

Gist : Mr. Tulliver recovers his senses for a short while. During this brief interval of consciousness, he expresses his regret to his wife for what has happened but makes it clear that his sister should not be pressed to repay the loan. He also exhorts Tom never to forgive Wakem and always to be on the look-out for an opportunity to take revenge.

Critical Note : This is, again, a very pathetic chapter. Mr. Tulliver's expression of regret to his wife for what has happened moves us deeply. But the misfortune has not softened Mr. Tulliver towards his enemy, Wakem. Even his serious illness and heavy financial loss have not subdued Mr. Tulliver's spirit so far his enemy is concerned.

Page 119. *spasmodic*—occurring at brief intervals.

apathetic—indifferent ; heedless.

Page 120. *the prostrate*—the man who lay flat on account of his illness ; Mr. Tulliver who lay in bed, stricken by paralysis.

deeds—legal documents ; agreements ; contracts, etc.

chest—box.

allays—always.

Page 121. *aggravated*—made the situation more serious ; gave offence ; caused annoyance.

bessy—short name for "Elizabeth".

raskills—rascals.

The little wench—the little girl ; that is, Maggie. Mr. Tulliver always referred to his daughter as "the little wench".

sanative effect—healing effect.

Book III—CHAPTER 5

TOM APPLIES HIS KNIFE TO THE OYSTER

Tom decides to get a job in some large business and to try to rise quickly through hard work and industry. He goes to the town of St. Ogg's to see his uncle Deane and seek his advice about getting a job. Mr. Deane is a pompous type of man who is very proud of the way in which he has risen in life. He subjects his nephew to a thorough cross-examination but gives no definite promise of getting him a job. However, he says that he would try to help Tom. Tom comes back home with the feeling that he is a good-for-nothing and that whatever education he has received is useless to him for the practical business of life. He knows no book-keeping or copying or calculations or anything of that kind. On returning home he tells Maggie the result of his interview with uncle Deane. Maggie says that if she had learnt book-keeping she would now have taught it to Tom. This remark displeases Tom. He scolds Maggie for always talking to him in a superior manner and for trying to set herself up above him and above everybody else.

Critical Note: In this chapter the character of Mr. Deane is further revealed to us. He is very proud of his attainments and very critical of Tom. He is essentially a kindly man and would like to do something for Tom but he is rather distant and cold and does not hold out much of a hope to him. As a result of that, Tom returns home greatly distressed. We also have in this chapter a minor quarrel between Tom and Maggie. Maggie receives a snub from Tom for what he calls her self-conceit.

Page 121. *And he had risen in the world on a scale of advancement which accorded with Tom's ambition*—Uncle Deane had risen in life very rapidly. It was Tom's ambition that he too should rise in life quickly. Thus uncle Deane was an embodiment of Tom's own ambition.

accorded with—agreed with ; corresponded to.

Page 122. *averting the sale*—preventing the sale.
colouring—blushing.
circumlocution—using superfluous words ; using more than necessary words to convey the idea.
a most provoking habit—a most offensive habit.

Page 123. *unlading* - unloading.
reckoning—calculating.

Page 124. *You must make a ball of yourself*—you must adjust yourself to all situations.

Explanation with reference to the context : *Why I am no mechanic............you must make a ball of yourself, that's where it is*—These lines are taken from George Eliot's novel, *The Mill On The Floss.* The speaker of these lines is Mr. Deane who is talking to his nephew Tom and telling him what is needed for success in life. Referring to his own success in life, he says that, though not a mechanic, he was able to think of a couple of things that mechanics could never have thought of. He thought of certain measures of economy in the business. Those measures led to increased profits. Besides, he claims to have acquired an exhaustive knowledge of the quality of goods that were being loaded or unloaded at the wharf of Messrs. Guest & Co. of which he was a junior partner. He goes on to say that his rise in life has been due to his hard work, his shrewdness, and his capacity for adjusting himself to his environment. He ends his speech by advising his nephew to develop a certain flexibility so as to fit into every possible situation and to adjust himself to changing circumstances.

Explanation with reference to the context : *You are always setting yourself up above me..............much better than you can*— These lines are taken from George Eliot's novel, *The Mill On The Floss.* The speaker of these lines is Tom who is talking to Maggie and scolding her for her self-conceit and self-opinionatedness. Tom complains that Maggie has always thought herself superior to him and to others. He objects to the defiant manner in which she spoke to her uncles and aunts and asks her not to assume airs of importance. Tom claims to have better judgement than Maggie and warns her not to think that she is better than everybody else. These lines are

indicative of Tom's frequent harshness towards Maggie whose deep love for himself he could never understand till the last episode.

Book III—CHAPTER 6

TENDING TO REFUTE THE POPULAR PREJUDICE AGAINST THE PRESENT OF A POCKET KNIFE

Gist : All the house-hold goods of the Tulliver family are sold by auction. Mrs. Tulliver's face now looks ten years older on account of the agony that she has suffered on seeing all her favourite things knocked down by the auctioneer's hammer. The uncles and aunts who were expected to buy most of the goods buy very little. This is a great disappointment to Mrs. Tulliver, because she wanted her favourite things to remain in the family and not to go into the hands of strangers. Maggie feels much grieved to find that Uncle Glegg has not kept his promise to buy the books. An old playmate of Tom's boyhood days, by the name of Bob Jakin, turns up most unexpectedly. This fellow has tried his hand at various trades, but has not yet settled down to any. Having learnt about the misfortune of the Tulliver family, he calls on Tom and offers him a gift of nine gold sovereigns. Both Tom and Maggie express their sincere thanks to Bob for his kindness, but do not accept the money. Tom is determined to earn money by work and to take no charities. However, he greatly appreciates Bob Jakin's kind offer.

Critical Note : In this chapter, the character of Bob Jakin is revealed to us. He is a very talkative person and he does not mind a little cheating occasionally but, on the whole, he has a good heart. His talk is very entertaining and covers a wide range of miscellaneous subjects. There is a lot of humour in this chapter.

Most of the speeches in this chapter are made by Bob Jakin. It will be seen that his manner of speaking is different from the manner of speaking of Tom and Maggie. In earlier chapters, we have already seen Mr. and Mrs. Tulliver talking in the same way. Being an uneducated man, Bob Jakins speaks English in an uneducated manner.

Page 125. *manifest*—to show.
recurrence—occurring again and again.
spasmodic—occurring at brief intervals.
insensibility—a state of unconsciousness.
importunate—urgent.
blond—fair.

Page 126. *servant, Mr. Tom*—your servant, Mr. Tom. (These words are spoken by Bob Jakin who pays a visit to Tom).
Parlour—a family sitting room.
Gen—gave.

Page 127. *cordial delight*—a feeling of friendliness mixed with joy.
arter—after.
bruised—injured ; hurt.
shins—the lower part of the legs.
un—one.
hev—have.
istid—instead.
niver—never.
drowndin'—drowning.
reminiscences—memories of the past.
to ax you—to ask you.
afore—before.

Page 128. *barge*—a trading boat.
between whiles—in the intervals.
fortni't—fortnight.
allays—always.
I doused it—I extinguished it.
suvreigns—sovereigns.
sperrited—spirited ; courageous.

an' that war summat new—and that was somewhat new.

broth—soup.

rat-ketcher—rat catcher.

Page 129. *packman*—a man who carries a bundle of cloth, linen, etc. and goes about from place to place selling these articles.

fellers—fellows.

paradisaic picture—the picture of paradise ; a very pleasing picture.

westcoat—waistcoat.

yead—head.

yoursen—yourself.

the master's broke—the master is ruined.

jur—far

I am bit of a Do—I am a clever fellow who sometimes plays trick upon others and can even cheat them of their money.

a big flat—a big fool.

it's on'y when a feller's a big rogue or a big fat, I like to let him in a bit, that's all—Bob Jakin says that he does not mind occasionally cheating other people. But he cheats either those who are big rogues or those who are utter fools.

Book III—CHAPTER 7

HOW A HEN TAKES TO STRATAGEM

Gist : The sale of Mr. Tulliver's Mill and his land is now about to take place. It is expected that Uncle Deane might prevail upon Messrs. Guest & Co. (of which he is a junior partner) to buy Mr. Tulliver's propetty, in which case it would be possible for Mr. Tulliver to be retained as the manager of the mill in the employment of that firm. Mrs. Tulliver is afraid lest

the property should be bought by Wakem. She forms a scheme to ward off this possibility. She approaches Wakem and appeals to him not to purchase her husband's property. She pleads that her husband went to law against her wishes and that it was wrong on his part to have entered into litigation. She implores Wakem to allow Messrs. Guest & Co. to purchase the mill and the land so that her husband can be retained as a paid manager. Wakem says that if he purchases the property, he would also be willing to retain Tulliver as a paid manager. But Mrs. Tulliver points out that her husband would never agree to serve under Wakem, because he looks upon Wakem as a bitter enemy. Wakem refuses to give any definite promise. Mrs. Tulliver returns home thinking that she has achieved her purpose. But, in actual fact, she has succeeded only in achieving the reverse of what she had intended. Till Mrs. Tulliver's visit, Wakem had not entertained any ideas about purchasing property. But now it occurs to him that if he were to buy that property he would be able to humiliate Tulliver still further and that he would at the same time be able to enjoy the pleasure of doing a generous deed by offering the job of manager to Tulliver.

Critical Note: This chapter is mainly devoted to Mrs. Tulliver and the manner in which her mind works. This is the only occasion on which Mrs. Tulliver takes any initiative in her life. But her initiative is ill-conceived and leads to a further deterioration in the situation. Indeed, we are convinced of a certain mental deficiency in Mrs. Tulliver. She has committed a blunder in going to her husband's enemy and pleading for mercy.

Page 130. *stratagem*—device; contrivance; scheme.

conscientiously—dutifully.

musket—gun.

will spoil a life or two—will kill one or two human beings.

Chancery—a court of law.

Page 131. *lapse of time*—passing of time.

expedients—useful schemes or methods.

brooding over—thinking over ; meditating over.

Page 132. *portentous*—remarkable ; unusual.

anomaly—something abnormal.

chicks—chickens.

matron—elderly woman.

Golden Lion—the name of an inn.

curtsying—bowing.

deferentially—respectfully.

bailies—bailifs ; court officials who are responsible for the realization of debts.

Page 133. *erigation*—irrigation.

Page 135. *mortification*—humiliation.

malice—ill will.

relish—enjoyment ; pleasure.

self-approbation—self-approval.

jejune—empty ; barren.

Book III—CHAPTER 8

DAY-LIGHT ON THE WRECK

Gist : Tulliver has now improved in health and is well enough to be able to come downstairs from his bed-room. Wakem has purchased Tulliver's mill and land. This is a great blow to Tulliver. The uncles and aunts as well as Mrs. Tulliver think that Tulliver should have no objection to serving as a manager in the service of Wakem. Left to himself, Tulliver would never agree to such a proposition. But, under the pressure of his wife and because of her pleadings, he agrees to accept the proposition. It is a very bitter pill for him to swallow, but he realises the truth in his wife's pathetic assertions that he is wholly responsible for reducing the family to a state of pauperism.

Critical Note : This is, again, a very moving and pathetic chapter. Mr. Tulliver receives the heaviest blow of his life when he is compelled to agree to serve as an employee of Wakem. We cannot help feeling sorry for Mr. Tulliver who has all his life been an honest and upright man and who has ruined himself only through his obstinacy.

Page 136. *chestnut boughs*—branches of the chestnut tree.

descent into pauperism—being reduced to a state of pennilessness.

pigsty—a house for the pigs ; a dirty place.

Page 137. *Lady day*—25th March ; day of Annunciation of the Virgin.

Book III—CHAPTER 9

AN ITEM ADDED TO THE FAMILY BIBLE

Gist : Although Tulliver has assured his wife that he would take up service under Wakem, his heart is still burning with hatred against that man. He cannot change his opinion that Wakem is a rogue. Under his directions, Tom makes an entry in the family Bible that Tulliver would serve under Wakem honestly, but that he would never forgive Wakem. Tulliver also makes Tom write in the Bible that Tom would wait for an opportunity to take revenge upon Wakem. Thus Tulliver's vindictiveness is recorded in the family Bible.

Critical Note : Mr. Tulliver's obstinacy and his revengeful nature are emphasised in this chapter. Here, again, we see how different Tom is from Maggie. Maggie thinks it wicked to take revenge but Tom readily agrees to his father's demand.

Page 139. *renunciation*—accepting one's sad fate without complaining.

tethered—tied ; limited and confined.

much pinching—saving money in a miserly fashion.

Page 140. *gravel*—small stones often mixed with sand.

Page 141. *props up*—supports ; strengthens.

BOOK IV
THE VALLEY OF HUMILIATION

Book IV—CHAPTER 1

A VARIATION OF PROTESTANTISM UNKNOWN TO BOSSUET

Gist : This chapter describes the religious and moral position of the Tulliver and Dodson families. The members of these families had traditional religious beliefs. Religion was not a passion with them. They had conventional, worldly notions and habits. Their belief in the Unseen seemed to be rather of the pagan kind ; their moral notions, which they held firmly, were based upon hereditary customs. Mr. Tulliver, though a regular church-goer, did not think it irreligious to record his revengefulness in the family Bible. Mr. Tulliver believed that the church was one thing and common sense another, and he believed himself to be a man of great common sense.

Critical Note : This chapter does not carry the story forward. In other words, there is no plot-development here. We have here an elaborate description of the people of St. Ogg's and especially of the two chief families with which the novel deals, namely, the Tullivers and the Dodsons. As the story does not move forward in this chapter, it does not have much interest for the average reader.

Page 143. *Bossuet*—(1627—1704) one of the greatest of French pulpit orators, and one of the ablest defenders of the doctrines of the Catholic Church.

sordid—wretched ; unattractive.

irradiated—illuminated ; lighted ; made bright.'

tenacity—firmness ; rigidity.

Where the great river flows for ever onward......the

world's mights heart—This is an important description of the river Floss which is not just a river but which also possesses a symbolic significance in the novel.

Page 144. *the very slightest tincture of theology*—negligible mixture of theory and doctrine. Theology is that branch of human learning which deals with the study of religion.

conspicuous—prominent ; striking.

Page 145. *notwithstanding*—in spite of.

vindictiveness—revengefulness.

vicar—priest.

irreproachable—blameless.

Book IV—CHAPTER 2

THE TORN NEST IS PIERCED BY THE THORNS

Gist : Maggie, being a girl of imaginative and passionate nature, finds her life sad and monotonous. She is thrown more than ever on her inward self. She becomes more thoughtful and reflective than ever before. Her father is able to attend to business again and he has started acting as Wakem's manager. Tom has got a job with Messrs. Guest & Co. and goes to work every morning. The chief anxiety of Mr. Tulliver now is to pay off all the remainder of the debts. This anxiety is shared by Tom.

Critical Note : This chapter also does not carry the story forward. However, the state of mind of Maggie, the heroine of the novel, is clearly revealed to us. The sadness, the dullness and the depression of her life during this period are clearly conveyed to us, thus arousing our sympathy for her. Our sympathy is also aroused for Mr. Tulliver who is anxious to pay off the remainder of his debts. We admire Mr. Tulliver for his honesty and integrity. Thus this chapter is useful from the point of view of psychological analysis.

Page 145. *sustaining*—strengthening.

transient—short-lived ; brief.

dreary—dull and monotonous.

precocity—showing greater intelligence in childhood than is normally the case; being mentally in advance of one's years.

Page 146. *placid*—peaceful.

Page 147. *to stint*—to save money in a miserly fashion.

sullenness—a feeling of depression and irritation.

incubus—anything oppressive; something devilish or demoniac.

Book IV—CHAPTER 3

A VOICE FROM THE PAST

Gist: Bob Jakin calls on Tom but Tom is not at home. He meets Maggie for whom he has brought a number of books which she receives from him thankfully. Bob Jakin also offers to Maggie the gift of a pup which, however, she declines. Maggie's life, like the life of the other members of the family, is very unhappy. She suffers from a feeling of loneliness and utter absence of joy. There is a heavy weight upon her mind all the time. She wants some key that would unlock the mystery of life. She requires some explanation of this hard life that she has to lead. In the midst of her gloomy meditations, she happens to read a book called *Imitation of Christ* by Thomas a Kempis and is profoundly influenced by its teaching. Her habits now undergo a charge as a result of the lesson of self-control and renunciation which that book has taught her. The secret of happiness, she learns, lies in going wholly out of oneself and retaining nothing of self-love.

Critical Note: In this chapter we see another example of Bob Jakin's kindness. At the same time, we watch the mental development of Maggie under the influence of *Imitation of Christ* a book by Thomas a Kempis. There is hardly any plot development in this chapter which reveals to us the effect of the philosophical and spiritual message of Thomas a Kempis. At the same time, this chapter confirms our impression about the good-heartedness of Bob Jakin.

Page 147. *bull-terrier*—a kind of dog.

brindled—marked with spots or streaks.

Page 148. *efface*—to rub off.

I lighted on these books—I happened to get these books : I happened to come across these books.

cranium—the head ; the skull.

Page 149. *Mumps*—the name of Bob Jakin's dog.

riff-raff—a worthless creature.

cur—an inferior kind of dog ; a stray dog.

The expression of Mumps's........... confirmatory of this high praise—Notice the touch of humour here.

surly—sullen ; angry.

lors—lord.

Page 150. *It tells i' measuring out the flannel*—Bob Jakin explains that his big thumb helps him to measure less, thus deceiving his women customers.

skinflint women—miserly women.

Note. The whole talk of Bob Jaking is full of humour.

privation of joy—a denial of joy ; a state of misery.

Page 151. *freckled face*—spotted face ; face with marks left by chicken pox, etc.

Thomas a Kempis—(1380-1471) a priest and author, his chief work being the *Imitation of Christ*, which ranks second to the Bible and which has been translated into many languages.

Page 152. *stupor*—a state of insensibility.

renunciation—giving up the pleasures of life and worldly interests.

Page 153. *volcanic upheavings*—tumultuous emotional disturbances.

imprisoned passions—suppressed desires.

"contrary" child—obstinate, rebellious child.

BOOK V
WHEAT AND TARES

Book V—CHAPTER 1

IN THE RED DEEPS

Gist : Maggie is now seventeen years of age. One day, after several years, she happens to meet Philip in the Red Deeps where she was in the habit of taking walks. She still has sweet memories of Philip's kindness and affection towards her and Tom. But while Tom is now hostile to Philip, Maggie still harbours feelings of sympathy and gratitude towards the deformed boy. Philip tells her that during the last four years or so he has always been thinking of her. He also tells her that she has grown into a very beautiful maiden. He asks her to permit him to meet her sometimes. Maggie replies that it would not be right for them to meet because of the enmity between their fathers. Philip says that he is lonely and friendless. Maggie is also lonely and friendless and would like to meet Philip frequently but she knows her father's fierce hatred for the Wakem family. There is now a conflict in Maggie's mind whether to obey her own feelings and allow Philip to meet her or to respect her father's wishes and to break off all connection with Philip. Philip on his side wants to meet Maggie as much for her sake as for his own. He thinks that he might be able to comfort a girl whose circumstances have made her so unhappy

Critical Note : After a brief halt, the story now moves forward in this chapter. Philip re-enters into the life of Maggie. This is the beginning of a complication in her life. We are shown the mental conflict of Maggie between her desire and her sense of duty.

Page 154. *croft*—a small farm.

the daily walk which was her only indulgence—the daily walk which was her only pleasure.

Page 156. *adjusting her consciousness to this idea*—adjusting her mind to this idea.

Explanation with reference to the context : *I have no friend... ....to be glad to life :* These lines are taken from George Eliot's novel *The Mill On The Floss.* The speaker of these lines is Philip Wakem who, having met Maggie after several years in the Red Deeps, expresses his feelings towards her. He tries to win Maggie's sympathy and affection by telling her that he has no friend to whom he could unburden his heart. He says that he has nobody who cares for him. He wants her permission to meet her and to talk to her sometimes because her company would be a source of much happiness to him. He feels that his life is dark and that she would be a ray of sunlight in that darkness. These lines show Philip's feeling of complete loneliness and his deep love for Maggie.

Page 158. *her system of privation*—her leading a life of self-denial and renunciation.

her guardian angel—her protector and comforter.

Book V—CHAPTER 2

AUNT GLEGG LEARNS THE BREADTH OF BOB'S THUMB

Gist : Tom has been working hard in the firm where uncle Deane had got him a situation. He is saving as much as he can from his meagre income because he and his father are determined to pay off the debts. Bob has been meeting Tom off and on. Bob has been doing quite well as a travelling packman. One day he gives an idea to Tom for making money. The proposition consists in exporting certain commodities through a sailor-friend of Bob. A profit of ten to twelve per cent. on the investment for these commodities seems certain. But Tom needs cash for this purpose. He approaches uncle Glegg and offers him five per cent. of the profits in case uncle Glegg advances him some money for the investment. Aunt Glegg also agrees, though grudgingly, to make a contribution towards the investment provided she also gets a share in the profits. Bob Jakin shows his skilful salesman-

ship by persuading aunt Glegg to buy some of his wares from his pack although aunt Glegg is, as a rule, suspicious of packmen.

Critical Note : The story now moves further. A new prospect opens before Tom when Bob Jakin places before him a business proposition. A new hope dawns upon the mind of Tom. We see Tom's character in a favourable light. We find that he is concentrating upon one aim, namely, paying off his father's debts. We also have plenty of humour in this chapter, the humour arising from Bob Jakin's volubility (talkativeness) and the manner in which he sells some of his goods to the suspicious and over-cautious Mrs. Glegg. The commercial instinct of Mr. and Mrs. Glegg is also revealed to us in their agreeing to invest money provided they get an adequate return for their investment.

Ppge 158. *wagers*—bets.

Page 159. *integrity*—honesty ; incorruptibility.

surmounting discouragements—overcoming or conquering discouragements.

Page 160. *brindled*—spotted and streaked.

per zent—per cent.

carguy—cargo.
manifacturs—manufactures.

Salt, his name is—a' a briny chap he is—Bob Jakin says that the name of his sailor-friend is Salt. He adds that his friend is a briny fellow. The word "briny" means "saltish". As the taste of sea-water is saltish and as the name of Bob's sailor friend is Salt, the aptness and humour of the use of the word "briny" for him are obvious.

loquacity—excessive talkativeness.

unembarrassed loquacity—excessive talkativeness causing absolutely no awkwardness to the talker.

Page 161. *she ates her baked meat*—she eats her baked meat.

for I'm gettin's so fell o' money............and Mumps mightn't like her—Notice the humour here.

Page 162. *thimble*—a metal cover for the finger, used in sewing.

Mr. Glegg Mr. Glegg............threw her body into a ditch—Notice the humour which arises from the suspiciousness of Mrs. Glegg who is distrustful of packmen and who is presently going to be taken in by a packman in spite of her precautions.

Page 163. *brazenness*—shamelessness.

insurmountable—unconquerable.

sagacity—wisdom ; shrewdness.

Page 164. *bridling the irritation*—controlling the feeling of irritation ; checking the irritation.

nest-egg—small amount of money laid up as the beginning of an accumulation ; a small investment which is likely to bring profits.

Page 166. *buff*—light yellow colour.

I'm partial—I have a liking (for the light yellow colour).

ostentatious—showy.

ostentatious reluctance—making a show of one's unwillingness.

mum—madam.

Page 167. *straitforrard*—straight-forward.

ignirant—ignorant.

Page 168. *to warrant*—to justify.

tardy—slow.

Book V—CHAPTER 3

THE WAVERING BALANCE

Gist : Maggie wants to keep away from Philip. She tells him so in the Red Deeps. But Philip pleads with her not to reject him completely. Actually, she is in love with Philip but she cannot ignore her father's feelings in the matter.

Philip urger her not to take to a life of privation and penance and appeals to her to allow him to meet her sometimes. Maggie does not like secret meetings. But Philip says that he would meet her just by chance so that she should have no feeling of concealment. Maggie accepts this proposition.

Critical Note : In this chapter, again, we see the mental conflict of Maggie between her personal desire and her sense of duty towards her family. Left to herself, she would be able to subdue her desires and passions. But the entreaties and appeals and exhortations of Philip beat down her resistance and she agrees to meet him secretly in the Red Deeps. In this chapter we also see the passionate nature of Philip and his deep, compulsive love for Maggie. The discovery of these secret meetings will afterwards cause a rift between Maggie and her brother.

Page 169. *susceptibility*—being subject to certain influences ; being receptive to certain influences.

flutter—move about aimlessly.

delusive—deceptive.

fanaticism—narrow-mindedness.

Page 170. *resignation*—a feeling of acceptance of one's lot.

allayed—soothed.

stupefaction—a state of insensibility.

wilful—obstinate.

senselessness privation—a foolish self-denial.

benumbing—paralysing.

cramping—restrictive and restraining.

quiescence— a passive attitude of mind.

irrevocable—final ; that which cannot be altered or withdrawn.

sophistry—faulty reasoning.

Explanation with reference to the context : *It is the moment ....that we love better than victory* : These lines are taken from George Eliot's novel *The Mill On The Floss* and contain

one of her numerous comments on human nature. The novelist tells us that the strength of our will or determination is best tested when we have almost decided to say "no" to a proposal which has some kind of allurement for us. Having decided to reject such a proposal, we clutch at a chance of saying "yes". Any argument in favour of accepting the proposal will be most welcome to us even though the argument might be misleading. The result is that we succumb to the temptation of saying "yes". Our will-power or determination suffers a defeat but this defeat gives us a pleasure which the victory of our will-power would not have given us. This is precisely what happened to Maggie when Philip proposed that she should allow him to meet her and talk to her sometimes in the Red Deeps. Maggie's sense of duty urged her to disagree to the proposal. She made up her mind to say "no" to Philip. But, then, Philip suggested that he could meet her in the Red Deeps as if by chance, because there would be nothing dishonest in their meetings if they just met by chance. This was a misleading argument, but Maggie allowed herself to be deceived by it, because in her heart of hearts she did want the companionship of Philip and did want to meet him as had been suggested by him.

Page 170. *subterfuge*—a clever device; a deceptive argument.

Book V—CHAPTER 4

ANOTHER LOVE SCENE

Gist : About a year has passed. Maggie and Philip have been meeting in the Red Deeps and their intimacy has developed. Their meetings have been regarded by them, by a silent understanding, to be chance meetings, but in actual fact they have been meeting by design. No one else has yet come to know about these secret meetings. Philip has been lending books to Maggie in order to encourage her literary taste. Maggie finds great happiness in Philip's company but at the same time she feels guilty about these meetings. Philip has become more and more devoted to her. In fact, he is deeply and profoundly in love with her. Maggie wants

to keep the whole affair on a brother-sister level because any other relationship seems to her impossible in view of her father's feelings towards the Wakem family. One day, Philip makes a declaration of his love to her. She replies that she cares for him more than for anyone else' but that they must not think of marriage. She even kisses him at his request. She is in love with him but she also realizes the dangerous consequences of this love-affair if allowed to develop further.

Critical Note : This chapter marks another stage in the relations of Maggie and Philip. It is obvious that Maggie does not share her father's and her brother's fierce hatred for the Wakem family. Thus she is absolutely unlike Tom in this respect. She sees nothing wrong in her intimacy with Philip. But she keeps her relations with Philip secret so as not to hurt the feelings of her father who would doubtlessly feel enraged if he were to know about Maggie's secret meetings with Philip. Thus, in a way, Maggie has been deceiving her family. This chapter gives us further information about Philip's artistic and literary tastes and his emotional and passionate nature. In fact, there is a temperamental affinity between Maggie and Philip. The love-scene which has been described in this chapter is almost ominous, because it is followed by Tom's fury in the next chapter.

Page 171. *dubious*—doubtful ; uncertain.

fir—a kind of tree.

Corinne—the name of a novel which Philip had lent to Maggie for reading, the name of the heroine of that book being Corinne.

blond haired—fair haired.

elation—joy ; exultation

Page 173. *glistening*—shining.

Book V—CHAPTER 5

THE CLOVEN TREE

Gist : Tom's suspicions are aroused. Certain remarks by aunt Pullet and some circumstantial evidence have aroused

these suspicions. It flashes upon Tom's mind that Maggie and Philip must have been meeting secretly. Tom takes the earliest opportunity to talk to Maggie about this matter. He threatens to speak to his father about it if Maggie does not confess the whole truth. Maggie feels compelled to make the confession. She tells Tom that she and Philip have been meeting for about a year now and that she and he are in love with each other. Tom severely rebukes Maggie for the deception which she has been practising upon him and her father. He makes her swear on the Bible that she would not meet Philip again without Tom's permission. But she says that she must meet Philip for the last time. Tom accompanies Maggie to the Red Deeps where Philip is already waiting for Maggie. Tom uses bad language towards Philip for having tried to lure Maggie. Philip says that his intentions are perfectly honourable. But Tom ridicules Philip in his role of a lover for a fine girl like Maggie. Tom also taunts Philip on his deformed body. Thereafter Tom drags away Maggie with him. Maggie rebukes Tom for the way in which he has behaved towards Philip and says that he is hard-hearted, callous and un-Christian.

Critical Note : This chapter contains one of the most dramatic scenes of the novel—namely, the quarrel between Tom and Philip. We clearly see in this chapter the narrow-mindedness and the hardness of Tom who is incapable of understanding the real nature and mind of his sister or of sympathising with her. We also see that Maggie subordinates her personal desires to family prejudice. Maggie makes the sacrifice of her own happiness so as to spare the feelings of her father. This chapter marks a crisis in the relations of Tom and Maggie as also in the relations of Maggie and Philip.

Page 174. *deceit*—deception.

flushing into resentment—becoming red in the face on account of anger.

despised—hated.

Poge 175. *clandestine*—secret ; concealed.

renounce—give up.

Page 176. *galling*—painful.

darted—threw ; flung.

to trifle—to play ; to treat light-heartedly.

Page 177. *worm yourself into the affections of a handsome girl*—win the affection of a beautiful girl by pretending humility and self-effacement.

Giants have an immemorial right to stupidity and insolent abuse—Men with strong bodies have from time immemorial shown a lack of understanding and have always tried to bully weaker persons.

puny—small.

Page 178. *exasperated*—annoyed.

flouted—challenged and insulted.

to be imposed upon—to be deceived.

allusions to his deformity—references to Philip's hump.

Page 179. *Pharisee*—hypocrite. The Pharisees were a Jewish sect who came into strong conflict with Jesus Christ. In the New Testament, Jesus repeatedly denounces them for hypocrisy.

Explanation with reference to the context. *But you have always enjoyed..............of which your shining virtues are mere darkness.* These lines are taken from George Eliot's novel *The Mill On The Floss* and are spoken by Maggie to Tom. Tom has forbidden Maggie to meet Philip any more and has, at the same time, insulted Philip. Maggie in these lines points out the difference between her feelings towards her brother and her brother's feelings towards her. She says that she has always loved her brother but that he has always trampled upon her feelings. She refers to the many occasions during their early life when he was hard, unkind and callous towards her even though she loved him devotedly. She tells Tom that he is a man without pity and that he has no idea of his own faults and shortcomings. She says that he is not a true Christian because of his hard-heartedness. He may think himself to be self-righteous but he is incapable of any nobility of feeling. She calls him a Pharisee, that is, a narrow-minded, hypocritical, and unreliable person.

Book V – CHAPTER 6

THE HARD WON TRIUMPH

Gist : Three more weeks pass. Tom, ever since he got his job four years ago, has been trying to save money to be able to pay off his father's debts. As a result of his export transactions which were suggested to him by Bob Jakin, Tom has now made enough money for the purpose. His father is very happy to think that he would now be able to look everybody in the face. He tells Tom that he is proud of having a son like him.

Critical Note : This is a very touching chapter. Tulliver is overwhelmed with joy on learning that Tom has made enough money to pay off the debts. Indeed, he bursts into loud sobs on account of the flood of emotions. We are filled with appreciation for Tom's sustained efforts to free his father from the burden of debts. This chapter draws tears from the reader's eyes, so moving it is.

Page 179. *what's up now* ?—what has happened now ?

Page 180. *his usual incommunicativeness*—his habit of remaining silent and not talking to others.

to lay this by—to save this amount of money.

after I'm above ground for another four years—after I remain alive for another four years.

querulous—discontented ; complaining.

tremor—trembling.

discernible—noticeable ; visible.

hemmed in—restrained ; restricted.

Page 181. *belike*—most probably.

Golden Lion—the name of an inn.

The Messenger—the name of a newspaper.

Book V—CHAPTER 7

A DAY OF RECKONING

Gist : A meeting of Tulliver's creditors is held at an inn (The Golden Lion) in the town of St. Ogg's. Tulliver makes a speech in which he praises his son for having saved family honour. Tom also makes a speech saying that he is happy to have been able to help his father in paying off the debts. After the meeting, Tulliver rides homewards on his horse. He is in a mood of triumph and joy because he is once again a free man. When Tulliver approaches the yardgates of Dorlcote Mill, he sees Wakem coming out on a horse. Tulliver makes a dash on his old enemy and throws him down from his horse. He then rushes on Wakem and flogs him severely with his riding-whip. Wakem screams for help. Maggie comes running and catches hold of her father. Wakem rides away after threatening severe action against Tulliver. The excitement of this assault proves too much for Tulliver in his delicate state of health. He feels very ill. He now knows that his end is near. He shakes hands with his son as his last farewell and expresses the hope that Tom would look after his mother and sister after Tulliver's death. A little later, he dies, mumbling that this world has proved too much for him and that the world is no place for an honest man. Tom and Maggie cling to each other and weep together.

Critical Note : Here is another chapter of gripping interest with a dramatic situation. As soon as Tulliver has paid off his debts, his old spirit returns to him and he makes an assault upon Wakem. Thus, adversity has taught nothing to Tulliver. The scene of his death is very touching. He complains that this world has proved "too many" for an honest man like him. His last thoughts are about his wife and his daughter.

Page 181. *his eye kindling*—his eye lighted with joy.

alluding—referring.

winding up—closing ; ending.

Page 182. *eulogy*—praise.

integrity—honesty.

poor Bessy—poor Mrs. Tulliver.

the little wench—Maggie.

rearing—rising or raising.

staggering—moving with unsteady legs ; stumbling.

Page 183. *bruise*—a scratch ; a minor injury.

propped up—supported.

Page 184. *But mingled seed must bear mingled crop*—good actions mixed with evil actions must have good consequences mixed with evil consequences.

BOOK V
THE GREAT TEMPTATION

Book VI—CHAPTER 1

A DUET IN PARADISE

Gist : Two years pass. Maggie has been working in a school since her father's death. Her cousin Lucy now sends an invitation to her to come and stay with her for some time. Maggie accepts the invitation. Maggie's mother is already living there. When Lucy's mother had fallen ill, Maggie's mother had attended upon her. But Lucy's mother died and since then Maggie's mother has been keeping house for Mr. Deane and his daughter, Lucy. Lucy has become quite attached to her aunt (Maggie's mother). Lucy has also great affection for Maggie. Tom at this time is staying with his friend Bob Jakin who is now a married man. Lucy is being courted by Stephen, a handsome young man, the son of the senior partner of Messrs. Guest & Co. (of which Mr. Deane is a junior partner). Stephen is a daily visitor to Lucy's house. Stephen is sure in his mind that he will marry Lucy. Lucy informs Stephen that her cousin Maggie is coming to stay with her. Stephen speaks in a rather mocking fashion about Maggie whom he has never seen so far.

Critical Note : We are now introduced to a new character, namely, Stephen Guest, the suitor of Miss Lucy Deane. Two years have passed since the death of Maggie's father. Maggie's coming to stay with Lucy will mean the beginning of a new complication in her life. There is a lot of irony in the closing paragraph of this chapter, where Stephen's feelings with regard to Lucy are described. Stephen is sure in his mind that he would marry Lucy but soon he will change his mind. There is also irony in Stephen's mocking remarks about Maggie whom he has never seen before. When he actually meets Maggie in the next chapter, he is astonished at his absolutely wrong conjectures regarding her physical appearance.

Page 186. *the neat little lady in mourning*—this is a reference to Lucy who having lost her mother is in mourning.

nonchalant – unconcerned ; indifferent.

odoriferous—giving out an odour or smell.

wharf—a place for loading and unloading vessels on river bank.

to sing our glees—a "glee" is a musical composition for three voices.

Page 187. *with a littte air of pique*—looking as if she has been teased.

tenor—a term in music, meaning the highest adult male voice.

Judas-kisses—hypocritical or deceitful show of love. Judas was the man who betrayed Lord Jesus Christ.

Book VI—CHAPTER 2

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Gist : Maggie arrives at her cousin Lucy's house. Lucy feels very happy. She talks to Maggie about Stephen who has been courting her. Lucy says that they (she and Stephen) are not yet engaged but that she is in love with him. Lucy is very anxious to make Maggie happy. Maggie has been leading a very dull life at the school. Lucy tells her that she will have enough music to keep her happy. She tells Maggie that Stephen and Philip regularly visit her house and that they frequently have musical evenings. At the mention of Philip's name, Maggie gives a start. When Maggie is introduced to Stephen, Stephen is astonished. He had formed a different picture of her in his mind from the beautiful tall girl whom he now sees. Maggie's looks come as a pleasant shock to him. He pays her a compliment on her beauty. Stephen suggests that they should go to the river for a row. Lucy and Maggie agree. Stephen is inwardly hoping to be able to hold Maggie's

hands in the course of his rowing. He not only gets the opportunity to touch her hands but to hold her for a few moments when she slips in the boat.

Critical Note : A new character, namely Stephen, enters into the life of Maggie. Stephen becomes immediately interested in Maggie. In fact he falls in love with her at first sight. Maggie too feels attracted towards him. This will soon lead to a complication. Critics have not been able to understand why Maggie should feel so attracted towards a man of average qualities. But probably the novelist's intention was to show that an inhibited and emotionally starved girl like Maggie can fall in love with a mediocrity under certain conditions.

Page 188. *with playful gravity*—half-jokingly and half-seriously.

Page 189. *dismalness*—melancholy ; sadness.

riotous feast—abundant, plentiful, rich feast.

glee-men—a group of singers, generally three in number.

Page 190. *prattling*—chattering ; talking idly like a child.

Minny—the name of Lucy's dog.

nymph—a graceful and charming maiden.

timidity—a feeling of hesitation.

effaced—rubbed off.

designing—intriguing ; scheming ; artful.

Page 191. *furtively*—stealthily ; secretly ; without being seen.

remonstrated—protested ; argued against.

second-sight—capacity to guess things ; faculty for imagining things without seeing them.

pre-occupations—ideas formed in advance.

incumbent on you—obligatory on you.

interposed—intervened.

apropos—in that connection ; with reference to that.

Page 191. *beseeching tone*—tone of entreaty.

Page 192. *imprudent*—indiscreet ; unwise.

Explanation with reference to the context : *But when one is five and twenty one has not chalk-stones at one's finger ends that the touch of a handsome girl should be entirely indifferent............ between the two cousins :* These lines occur in George Eliot's novel *The Mill On The Floss* and refer to the feelings of Stephen towards Maggie. Stephen was already half engaged to Lucy when he met Maggie. He had always thought himself in love with Lucy. Besides, he believed himself to be a man of stable feelings. But when he took Maggie and Lucy out for boating, he hoped that he would get the opportunity of touching Maggie's hand at least twice. This desire to touch Maggie's hand, says the novelist, was quite natural in a man who was just twenty-five years old even though that man might be engaged to another woman. After all, no young man can be absolutely indifferent to the touch of a beautiful girl's finger-tips. But besides being beautiful, Maggie seemed to be otherwise interesting. Stephen had learned about Maggie's family troubles and poverty ; he had learnt about the great friendship between Maggie and her cousin Lucy ; and so his curiosity about Maggie had been fully aroused. It was, therefore, quite natural for him to feel a desire to look at Maggie as much as possible under the circumstances and to admire her beauty and graces.

gratifying—pleasing ; delightful.

Page 193. *reverie*—day-dreaming ; a mood of meditation.

Book VI—CHAPTER 3

CONFIDENTIAL MOMENTS

Gist : Maggie's meeting with Stephen has aroused in her certain new emotions. Stephen seems to have come from a world made up of love, beauty and delight. Stephen had looked at her admiringly and she had enjoyed the admiration. Lucy now asks Maggie if she has any objection to meeting Philip. Maggie has a great desire to meet Philip but she

cannot see him without getting Tom's permission. Maggie tells Lucy the whole story of her love for Philip and Philip's love for her and of how the whole affair had ended because of Tom's determined opposition. Lucy, however, insists that Maggie must meet Philip.

Critical Note : In this chapter Maggie takes her cousin Lucy into confidence and reveals her love-affair with Philip, a love-affair that had been cut short by Tom's intervention. Lucy is a very affectionate girl and is very fond of Maggie. She wants to make Maggie happy. She, therefore, urges Maggie not to deny herself the opportunity of meeting Philip in case she loves him. Maggie accepts this advice. Thus there is going to be a double complication in Maggie's life—one complication caused by her being attracted towards Stephen and the other complication caused by Philip's re-entry into her life.

Page 194. *when she had courted privation*—when she had intentionally chosen the path of renunciation (after reading the *Imitation of Christ* by Thomas a Kempis).

she recoiled from the remembrance of it—she shrank from the memories of that incident.

Explanation with reference to the context : *Her mind glanced back once for twice.........at the very threshold of her youth.* These lines are taken from George Eliot's novel *The Mill On The Floss*. The novelist in these lines describes Maggie's feelings after she had met Stephen. Stephen and Maggie had felt mutually drawn towards each other. Maggie felt herself to be in a new world altogether. She recalled the time when, after reading a book by Thomas a Kempis, she had learnt to keep her desires and her impulses under complete control and had decided to endure her misfortunes calmly and philosophically. She had been leading a life of privation and self-denial since reading that book. Now all that was over. The meeting with Stephen seemed to have liberated her impulses and longings from a self-imposed bondage. She was young and she was beautiful. There was no point in her renouncing the pleasures of life.

Book VI—CHAPTER 4

BROTHER AND SISTER

Gist : Maggie goes to Tom's lodgings next day in order to get his permission to meet Philip. At first Tom strongly objects to the proposed meeting. He says that this meeting would mean the revival of her love-affair with Philip. He makes it clear that if Maggie wants Philip as her lover, she will have to give up her brother altogether. But Maggie pleads with him till he agrees to her meeting Philip. He, however, warns her that she must not think of Philip as a suitor or a lover.

Critical Note : Maggie proves to be as good as her word. She had given a pledge to Tom that she would never meet Philip without Tom's permission. She now keeps that promise, She still loves her brother. She appeals to him to give her his permission to meet Philip. Tom is incapable of understanding his sister's mind or temperament. He speaks to her rather callously, though he softens when she appeals to him for his consideration.

Page 196 *tacit*—unspoken ; silent.

tremulous—trembling.

presentiment—a fore-warning.

Page 197. *absolve*—free.

Page 198 *pedagogue*—school-teacher.

Explanation with reference to the context : *I wished my sister to be a lady.........what I believe to be good for you* : These lines are taken from George Eliot's novel *The Mill On The Floss* and are spoken by Tom to Maggie when Maggie goes to him to seek his permission to meet Philip at Lucy's house. Tom knows that the love-affair between Philip and Maggie would be revived by such a meeting. He, therefore, gives his permission most reluctantly. In these lines, Tom tells his sister that he has

always tried to take care of her but that she has not appreciated his guardianship. He says that, being a man who is to mix a lot with other men, he knows more about life and human nature than she. It is, therefore, only fit and proper that she should submit to his judgment on all occasions and should not be led by her own impulses. He deplores the fact that her ideas have never been in accord with his and that she has never been able to realize what is good for her and what is harmful.

Book VI—CHAPTER 5

SHOWING THAT TOM HAD OPENED THE OYSTER

Gist : By now Tom has served the firm of Messrs. Guest & Co. for about seven years. His work has been greatly appreciated by his employers because of the conspicuous service that he has done to the firm. In recognition of his services, he is now given a share in the profits of the firm. Tom feels very grateful but there is something else he very much wants his employers to do. He would like to fulfil the last wish of his father. Accordingly, he requests his uncle Mr. Deane to prevail upon the firm to buy Darlcote Mill from Wakem. It is Tom's feeling that at some future date he might be able to buy the mill in his own name from Messrs. Guest & Co. if they now buy the said mill from Wakem. Mr. Deane promises to do something about it.

Critical Note : This chapter raises Tom in our estimation because of his single-minded devotion to his work. We have been made keenly conscious of Tom's narrowmindedness and callousness in his dealings with his sister Maggie. But here we are made equally aware of Tom's good qualities like integrity of character, industry, and devotion to duty. He is also very anxious to fulfil the last wish of his father who on death-bed urged his son to spare no pains to get back the ownership of the mill.

Page 199. *Newcastle*—the same of a town famous for its coal industry.

Page 200. *age tells well in business*—a man who is fairly advanced in age can succeed better in business than a mere youth.

Page 201. *I'll turn it over*—I will think over it.

Book VI—CHAPTER 6

ILLUSTRATING THE LAWS OF ATTRACTION

Gist : Maggie has attracted a lot of attention in the higher society into which she had been introduced by her cousin Lucy. After many years of misery and hardships, Maggie finds her new life not only pleasing but also exciting. Meanwhile, Philip, having gone away on a sketching expedition, returns after about twelve days. Thus the proposed meeting between Philip and Maggie did not materialise all these days. During these days Stephen became more assiduous in his attentions to Maggie. Stephen's attentions have produced a lot of effect upon Maggie's heart. One day Stephen comes to Lucy's house during the day when he was not expected and when Lucy is not at home. Maggie feels much embarrassed by this visit, but Stephen has come intentionally in order to have some time alone with Maggie. They have a little conversation. When leaving, Stephen suggests that she might come out a little way into the garden. He offers his arm to her. She takes the arm and they walk together in the garden. Then, feeling repentant, she rushes back into the house and begins to think of Philip.

Critical Note : Maggie's love-affair with Stephen now makes some progress. Maggie is falling more and more under the spell of Stephen. But at the same time she realizes that she is doing a great wrong both to Lucy and to Philip. The complication and the conflict in Maggie's life have already begun. We clearly see here that Maggie does not have a simple mind. She has a complex mind. She is now being pulled into opposite directions. Such a situation inevitably leads to disaster.

Page 201. *Launched into the higher society of St. Ogg's*—introduced into the upper social circles of St. Ogg's.

chid—past tense of "chide". "To chide" means "to scold" or "to rebuke".

She was no longer an unheeded person, liable to be chid—Maggie had now acquired a lot of importance in the town of St. Ogg's. She was no longer an insignificant person receiving her mother's rebukes.

Page 202. *Novalis*—(1772–1801), German romantic poet and novelist, author of *Poems, Religious, Mystic and Secular*. His real name was Friedrich Leopold Von Hardenberge. Novalis was his pen-name.

aphorisms—maxims ; pithy sayings ; quotable remarks.

questionable aphorisms—doubtful maxims ; untrue statements.

character is destiny—the fate of a human being is determined by his own good and bad qualities.

Hamlet—the name of the hero of Shakespeare's play *Hamlet*.

speculative—philosophical.

irresolute—indecisive ; unable to make up one's mind.

Ophelia—the girl whom Hamlet loved.

soliloquies—speeches made aloud to oneself without there being any listener.

sarcasms—taunting remarks.

Polonius—the name of Ophelia's father.

Explanation with reference to the context : *The tragedy of our lives is not created entirely from within...............to his father-in-law.*—These lines occur in George Eliot's novel *The Mill On The Floss.* In these lines, the novelist comments upon human life in general and the cause of human tragedy. The philosopher Novalis said that if a man meets a tragic fate, he is himself to blame. In the opinion of Novalis, a man's own faults, shortcomings and weaknesses of character are responsible for his tragedy. But George Eliot points out that

the tragedy of a man is not always due to the weaknesses of his character only. Sometimes there are outward circumstances which bring about the tragedy of a human being. George Eliot illustrates per opinion with reference to Shakespeare's *Hamlet.* In this drama, the hero whose name is Hamlet, is supposed to meet a tragic fate on account of his irresoluteness and want of decision. But George Eliot points out that the external facts which were responsible for Hamlet's tragedy should not be ignored. If, for instance, Hamlet's uncle had died an early death, and his father had lived to a good old age, the course of Hamlet's life would have been different. Hamlet, then, would have married Ophelia and would have retained his sanity. It is true that, even then, being of a philosophical temperament he would have indulged in soliloquies and would have made satirical remarks about his father-in-law, but there would have been no tragedy.

prefiguring imagination—anticipatory imagination ; imagination that forms pictures of the future.

deferred—postponed.

sketching expedition—a trip undertaken to draw pictures.

assiduous—importunate ; urgent ; emphatic.

Page 203. *unobtrusive*—non-interfering.

quartet—a group of four persons.

without the slightest spasm of jealousy—without the least feeling of jealousy.

Is it an inexplicable thing............directed to her—It made Lucy very happy to see that Stephen was so courteous and nice towards Maggie. In fact, Lucy enjoyed Stephen's company even more in Maggie's presence, although Stephen talked more to Maggie than to Lucy. The fact is that Lucy was a girl without the least jealousy in her nature. She was a most trustful and simple-minded girl. She could never imagine that any love-affair would develop between Stephen and Maggie.

the coming bazaar—the charity bazaar that had been sponsored by Mrs. Kenn, the wife of the Vicar of St. Ogg's.

scenes of dissipation—actions in which one's energy is completely wasted.

reticule—a little net-work bag carried by ladies.

Here is another of the moral results of this idiotic bazaar—..............This is a humorous speech by Stephen.

Page 204. *vicious*—malicious and wicked.

benevolence—kindness and generosity.

tacit—silent ; unspoken.

improvisation—doing something at the last minute without previous preparation.

Book VI—CHAPTER 7

PHILIP RE-ENTERS

Gist : The next morning happens to be rainy. Stephen is expected at Lucy's house earlier than usual. But before Stephen comes, Philip arrives rather unexpectedly. Lucy is happy at this meeting between Maggie and Philip. She given them some time to talk to each other alone. Maggie tells Philip that she has obtained her brother's permission to see him. Philip asks if they can be friends. Maggie replies that they can be friends and that they can see each other just as long as she stays with Lucy but that she is already thinking of going away to take up a job. At this stage Stephen appears on the scene. Philip, Stephen and Lucy join in singing together while Maggie listens to them, at the same time continuing with her embroidery. Maggie becomes aware of Stephen's gazing at her admiringly. It is clear to her that Stephen is deeply in love with her. Somehow she enjoys this feeling, although she still believes that she is in love with Philip. Philip perceives Stephen's interest in Maggie. This makes him jealous.

Critical Note : Maggie's emotional life is now becoming more complicated. Philip re-enters into her life. She has already fallen under the spell of Stephen but she still believes that she is in love with Philip. The complex nature of Maggie is nowhere seen more than in her being in love with two men simultaneously. Although we feel quite sympathetics towards Maggie, we cannot completely exonerate her of the wrong that she is knowingly committing towards Lucy by encouraging Stephen in his silent but perceptible courtship of her.

Page 207. *perverting*—twisting out of shape.

mutilating—deforming.

cynicism—a dislike of human beings and human nature.

contrition—repentance ; remorse.

chide—scold.

Page 208. *solicitous*—anxious.

duet—two persons singing alternatively.

Page 209. *pent-up feeling*—accumulated but suppressed feeling.

trio—a group of three persons.

quartet—a group of four persons.

epigram—a short and witty or wise statement.

canterbury—a stand with divisions in it for holding music books.

Beggar's Opera—the name of a musical play by J. Gay produced in 1728.

Page 210. *plaintive*—complaining ; melancholy.

warbling—singing.

troubadour—a professional singer of love-songs in the Middle Ages.

antidote—a statement or medicine to cure some malady.

Book VI—CHAPTER 8

WAKEM IN A NEW LIGHT

Gist: Lucy now plays a part to bring about the sale of Dorlcote Mill by Wakem to Messrs. Guest & Co. She talks to Philip privately and explains why it is necessary that Philip's father should agree to sell the mill to Messrs. Guest & Co. She urges Philip to prevail upon his father to agree to the sale. Philip weighs the whole situation and comes to the conclusion that if he could bring about the sale, his position in relation to Tom and Maggie would improve and that at least one obstacle between him and the Tulliver family would be removed. Accordingly, he talks to his father about it. He confesses that he had been meeting Maggie secretly in the Red Deeps and that he is in love with her. He also says that it is quite likely for Maggie to agree to marry him. At first Wakem is furious that his son should be thinking in terms of marrying the daughter of a man who had assaulted him and had been his sworn enemy. But, on thinking the matter over, he softens. He tells his son that he would be willing to sell the mill and to accept Maggie as his daughter-in-law. Philip feels delighted and communicates to Mr. Deane his father's willingness to sell the mill.

Critical Note: As the title of this chapter shows, Wakem now appears in a new light. Here we see the human side of Wakem. To please his son he expels from his mind all hatred for the Tulliver family. We also witness a concrete example of Lucy's great affection for her cousins, Maggie and Tom. It is she who urges Philip to prevail upon his father to sell the mill to Messrs. Guest & Co. Lucy is very keen to bring about some sort of understanding between Tom and Philip so that Tom should agree to Maggie's marriage with Philip. This chapter also marks a stage in Tom's efforts to recover the mill and thus fulfil his father's dying wish.

Page 212. *contrived*—managed.

for all the indulgence I've heaped on you—all the affection and love I have lavished on you.

Page 214. *rancour*—ill-will ; malice.

boor—an uncivilized person.

strode—walked with long steps.

banged it—shut it with great noise ; slammed it.

Page 215. *jilt*—an inconstant girl ; a girl who gives a promise of marriage to a man and then leaves him.

deuced—damned.

deuced fine eyes—(colloquial way of speaking) ; very fine eyes.

without the airs and petty contrivances other women have—without the coquetry and vanity which other women have.

I've no sauce that will make him go down—it is impossible for me to tolerate him.

Book VI—CHAPTER 9

CHARITY IN FULL DRESS

Gist : Some time later Mrs. Kenn, the wife of the Vicar of St. Ogg's, arranges a charity bazaar. A number of stalls are put up and a large variety of articles are for sale. All the gentry of St. Ogg's visit the bazaar and make purchases. Maggie and Lucy are among those who conduct the sales at one of the stalls. Stephen is more than ever in love with Maggie but he conceals his feelings from Lucy who can never imagine that Stephen can love any other woman. Stephen goes to Maggie's stall and asks her confidentially if he should get her something to eat or drink. She urges him to move away. Maggie is completely under the spell of Stephen but she is trying to conquer her feelings in order to keep her conscience clear. Dr. Kenn is also present at the bazaar and he makes the acquaintance of Maggie. Dr. Kenn feels sympathetic towards Maggie on seeing an expression of pain on Maggie's face. In a private conversation with Lucy, Maggie tells her that she cannot marry Philip against the will of Tom. Maggie says that she still loves Philip but that she cannot give up Tom for Philip's sake.

Critical Note: This chapter marks a development in the relations of Maggie and Stephen. Stephen gets an opportunity to have an intimate talk with Maggie at her stall. Maggie is mentally perturbed because of the conflict that has started in her mind. We also see in this chapter how successfully Stephen is concealing his real feelings from Lucy. The trustful nature of Lucy is further emphasized in this chapter. We also see the emotional complication of Maggie becoming more tangled.

Page 216. *culmination*—climax.

oriel—a portico or recess in the form of a window built out from a wall and supported by brackets.

venerable—ancient.

Page 217. *a capital wit*—an excellent wit.

Page 218. *antipathy*—hostility.

hypocrite—an insincere person ; a person who hides his real feelings.

Page 219. *simper*—to smile in an artificial manner.

not being accustomed to simper amiable denial of obvious facts—not in the habit of denying anything by smiling artificially and refusing to acknowledge facts which are obvious.

parishioner—the resident of a parish. A parish is a district under the spiritual charge of a priest.

situation—job (the word "situation" is often used to mean "job").

the souls by nature pitched too high by suffering plung'd too low—persons who have a lofty or sublime nature but who are oppressed or crushed by suffering.

Page 221. *Park House*—the name of the residence of the Guest family.

Book VI—CHAPTER 10

THE SPELL SEEMS BROKEN

Gist : The Guest family hold a dance at their house. Maggie and Lucy also attend the dance. At first Maggie is quite indifferent towards the dancing but soon the music stimulates her and she participates in the dance. Stephen finds an opportunity to take Maggie out of the dance hall. They walk about together arm in arm. Suddenly Stephen starts showering kisses upon Maggie's wrist. Maggie becomes furious and says that he has no right to take such a liberty with her. She asks him to leave her to herself and to avoid her in future. She is no doubt in love with Stephen. But she realizes that she must not be treacherous to Lucy. Next morning Philip comes to see her. She tells him that she loves him and would have liked to marry him but that she does not wish to divide herself from her brother.

Critical Note : This chapter carries Maggie's love-affair with Stephen a step further. Maggie tries to fight against the temptation and believes that she will succeed. Maggie's mental conflict has become more acute now. At the same time, she still has a soft corner for Philip. In fact, Maggie is at this time in love with both Stephen and Philip. But while her love for Philip is based mainly on her sympathy and a certain temperamental affinity, her love for Stephen has a physical and sensual basis.

Page 221. *but at length the music wrought in her young limbs and the longing came*—but at last the music produced its stimulating effects upon her youthful body and she experienced a desire for dancing.

civility—politeness ; courtesy.

Page 222. *repugnance*—a feeling of repulsion and disgust.

He had been gaily assiduous to Lucy—he had been paying attentions to Lucy in a cheerful and gay mood.

waltz—a kind of dance.

conservatory—a place where plants are kept.

Page 223. *mute*—silent.

Parthenon—a famous temple built in ancient times at Athens and regarded as the finest specimen of Greek architecture. It was constructed under the direction of Phidias, a famous sculptor.

panting—breathing quickly with the bosom visibly rising and falling.

Page 224. *Scotch fir*—a kind of tree. (There were a large number of Scotch firs growing in the Red Deeps where Maggie and Philip had been having secret meetings in the past.)

Page 225. *enchanted cup*—magic cup.

omniscience—knowledge of everything.

Book VI—CHAPTER 11

IN THE LANE

Gist : Maggie goes to stay for a few days with her aunt, Mrs. Moss. She has hardly been there for four days when she receives an unexpected visit from Stephen. Stephen has been unable to drive out Maggie's image from his mind and he has come under an inner compulsion. He tells her that he is madly in love with her and that he would stake anything for her sake. Maggie explains that she cannot be false to Lucy, and that besides she had given a word to Philip that if she married at all she would marry him (Philip). Stephen urges her to drive out such scruples from her mind. He says that her duty to Lucy or her promise to Philip is nothing as compared to their love for each other. Maggie says that she certainly loves him but that they must give up all thoughts of marrying. Before Stephen goes away from her on this occasion she permits him to kiss her.

Critical Note : The conflict in Maggie's mind is aggravated in this chapter by Stephen's tenacity. Stephen appears here

as a persistent and determined suitor of Maggie. But Maggie's resistance does not yet break down. The battle in her mind between her passionate love for Stephen and her passionate sincerity to Lucy and Philip is very painful to her. This chapter, like several others, is an interesting study in psychology.

Page 225. *care-dimmed eyes*—eyes which had become weak on account of constant anxiety.

Page 226. *transient avatar*—a short-lived personification ; a deity who has to stay there for a short time.

Page 227. *entreatingly*—in a pleading tone.

a nightmare—a frightening dream ; anything frightful.

Page 228. *impetuously*—vehemently ; forcefully.

Explanation with reference to the context : *But I see it is not so now.......... help because I love you* : These lines are taken from George Eliot's novel, *The Mill On The Floss* and are spoken by Maggie to Stephen. Stephen has been pleading his love to Maggie and has been urging her to marry him. Maggie, in these lines, tries to state her position. She points out that though she loves him it is not possible for her to marry him, because marrying him would mean breaking the hearts of Lucy and Philip. A human being cannot have everything in life. One has to give up so many things. One may have to renounce love because of certain compelling reasons. In her case, says Maggie, renouncing love is necessary for the sake of the app iness of Philip and Lucy. If she were to marry Stephen, she would cause misery to Philip and to Lucy and she would herself not be happy either. The thought of having caused misery to others would be like a poison in their married life. Accordingly, Maggie appeals to Stephen not to press his roposal of marriage.

Book VI—CHAPTER 12

A FAMILY PARTY

Gist : After having stayed with her aunt Moss for a few days, Maggie goes to Garum Firs to pay a visit to aunt Pullet. A family party is held at Mr. and Mrs. Pullet's house to celebrate a change in the fortunes of the Tulliver family. The mill has been bought by Messrs. Guest & Co., and Tom and his mother are going to stay at the old house. Maggie has decided to take up a job so as to lead an independent life. Lucy takes this opportunity to talk to Tom privately about the possible marriage of Maggie and Philip. But Tom makes it clear to Lucy that if Maggie marries Philip he would have nothing to do with her for the rest of his life. Lucy is very surprised by Tom's obstinacy.

Critical Note : This chapter marks another development in the plot. Of course there is nothing sudden or unexpected about this development. The mill now passes into the hands of Messrs. Guest & Co., making it possible for Tom and his mother to get back their old house. Tom's obstinacy is emphasised in this chapter. He expresses his determined opposition to the idea of a marriage between Maggie and Philip. It is clear that, in respect of obstinacy, Tom takes after his father. If Tom had agreed to the marriage of Maggie with Philip, the agonising conflict in Maggie's mind would have come to an end.

Page 230. *to have no cloud between herself and Tom was still a perpetual yearning in her*—It was a keen desire in Maggie's heart that there should be no misunderstanding between her and her brother. In spite of all the harshness and hardness of Tom, Maggie continued to love her brother throughout her life.

you carry all before you—you overcome all obstacles ; you manage to go ahead.

I'll be bound—I can give a guarantee.

you won't stop half way up the hill—you will not rest content with a partial fulfilment of your desire ; you will fully attain your purpose.

I do not know what you mean to do—The whole of this speech of Mrs Pullet is humorous. She thinks that she is going to perform a very generous act by giving Tom a table cloth as a present. Shs also finds fault with her husband's incapacity to remember which key will open a particular lock although she admits that her husband has a verry strong memory for her medicines.

Page 231. *that contriving young lady*—that scheming young lady, namely, Lucy, Lucy is here light-heartedly called a "contriving lady" because she has been trying to bring about a matrimonial union between Maggie and Philip though she fails in her purpose. *to defer a conversation*—to postpone a conversation. *pliant*—flexible.

repugnance—a feeling of disgust and repulsion.

zealous mediation—enthusiastic effort to bring about an understanding.

Page. 232. *perverse*—irrational and illogical.

metamorphose—transform ; change.

Book VI—CHAPTER 13

BORNE ALONG BY THE TIDE

Gist : Maggie now returns to St. Ogg's and resumes her stay with Lucy. She is most of the time sullen and glum, the reason being the battle of emotions that is still going on in her heart. There are moments when she thinks that she must look to her own happiness and marry Stephen without any consideration for Philip or Lucy. But then her conscience tells her that any happiness achieved by sacrificing the feelings of Philip and Lucy would not be true happiness. One day Lucy suggests that for the sake of recreation they must all go out for boating everyday till Maggie's day of departure which is approaching. It is decided that Philip should take the ladies out for boating next day and that Stephen should take

them out on the following day. Philip perceives that Stephen is in love with Maggie. He also perceives that Maggie in some way responds to Stephen's love. Philip has no sleep during the night on account of a fit of jealousy and in the morning he is in no condition to keep his appointment with the ladies for boating. So he sends a note to Stephen expressing his own inability and suggesting that Stephen might fill his place that day. Meanwhile Lucy decides not to go for boating in order to give an opportunity to Maggie and Philip to be alone together, not knowing that Philip is not coming and that Stephen would come instead. Lucy goes away to Lindum to make certain purchases. Maggie gets ready to go for boating with Philip. But just at that time Stephen enters. Stephen tells her that Philip could not come and that he has come instead. Stephen persuades Maggie to go with him for boating and she yields. Maggie is so lost in her own thoughts in the boat that she is hardly aware that Stephen has taken her far beyond the point where they were to get down from the boat in order to return to St. Ogg's. Stephen now begins to plead his love. Stephen speaks with such deep and earnest feeling that Maggie, who is already deeply in love with him, cannot reject his entreaties. They get into a Dutch vessel sailing to Mudport. Maggie now seems to have lost all her resistance and it appears that she has agreed to run away with Stephen and marry him. Stephen is inwardly very happy. He believes that now Maggie must become his. He murmurs words and phrases of tenderness and adoration into her ears. Stephen's passionate words lull her into a delicious sleep on the ship.

Critical Note : This is a very important chapter so far as plot-development is concerned. There is now a crisis in the life of Maggie. Without realizing it, she elopes with Stephen. Her moral resistance has broken down before her passion and before the ardent love-making of Stephen. Maggie's unintentional elopement with Stephen will cost her dear, even though she does not take the extreme step of marrying Stephen.

Page 232. *unaccountably*—without there being any reason or explanation for it.

quiescence—an attitude of submission.

torpor—laziness ; indolence.
fitful—occurring at intervals.
ardour—zest ; enthusiasm.
lain in ambush—lain in hiding.

Page 233. *quelled*—controlled and subdued.
presentiment—foreboding ; an anticipatory feeling.
beseeching—appealing.

Page 235. *cribbage*—a game of cards.
abstractedly—absent-mindedly.
sauntered—walked in an aimless manner.
hallowed—made sacred.
inarticulate—unspoken.

Page 238. *languid*—lazy.

Page 240. *irrevocable*—that which cannot be changed or altered.
relenting—softening.
haven—a place of rest and shelter.

Page 241. *poop*—the hinder part of a ship.

Book VI—CHAPTER 14

WAKING

Gist : Maggie wakes early in the morning on the ship. The old scruples return to her mind with an even greater force. She feels that she has completely disregarded her duty to Lucy. So she tells Stephen that it is not possible for her to marry him. She says that she should die rather than fall into the temptation of marrying him and thereby brush aside her ties with Lucy and Philip. Stephen is shocked at the change in Maggie. Only the previous night she seemed to have agreed to his proposal but now he finds that Maggie has changed her mind. He pleads with her again and again, asking her not to destroy his happiness and her own, but Maggie has made up her mind to suffer and to sacrifice. Stephen persists in arguing

with her, but Maggie does not yield. Stephen feels terribly hurt by her repeated refusals. Maggie leaves him in order to go back to St. Ogg's.

Critical Note : The crisis for Maggie now ends. Her moral scruples prove much stronger than her passion for Stephen. This decision of Maggie not to marry Stephen raises her greatly in our estimation. Indeed, this decision is worthy of a true heroine. If she had given way to the temptation, she would have committed a great wrong to Lucy and to Philip but to Lucy in particular. It is clear, therefore, that the tragedy of Maggie is a tragedy of a lost opportunity.

Page 242. *discernible*—dimly visible.

knit up with—bound with ; interwoven with

recoiled from—shrank from ; moved back from.

an outlawed soul—a soul not governed by any laws.

Page 244. *blight*—destroy ; wreck.

perversity—irrational and illogical behaviour.

wrench—an act of violence.

BOOK VII
THE FINAL RESCUE

CHAPTER 1

THE RETURN TO THE MILL

Gist : On her return to St. Ogg's Maggie goes straight to her brother, Tom, who is living at the old house near Dorlcote Mill along with his mother. The disappearance of Maggie with Stephen had caused much grief and pain to Tom because of the disgrace to the family name. Seeing Maggie, Tom becomes furious and tells her that he has washed his hands of her for ever and that she is nothing to him now. Maggie tries to explain her conduct to Tom but Tom refuses to believe her. He accuses her of having carried on a secret love-affair with Stephen just as she had previously been carrying on a secret love-affair with Philip. Seeing Tom's inflexible attitude, Maggie turns to leave him. Just at that time her mother comes up and, having heard Tom's bitter reproach, offers to go with Maggie in order to look after her. Tom says that his mother can always come to him whenever she feels like it but that his doors will be closed to Maggie. Maggie and her mother then go to the house of Bob Jakin who allows them to lodge there. Maggie expresses a wish to see Dr. Kenn, but Bob informs her that Dr. Kenn is in mourning because his wife has just died.

Critical Note : In this chapter we see the hardness and callousness of Tom. Indeed, Tom's consistent callousness is sharply contrasted with Maggie's consistent devotion to him. It is this aspect of Tom's character that makes him a detestable person in the eyes of some critics. There is no doubt that Tom's interpretation of Maggie's conduct is most unsympathetic and unpardonable. If he had loved Maggie as deeply as she loved him, he would have condoned even a more serious lapse on the part of Maggie. But, in this particular case, Tom does not even listen to the whole story of Maggie and jumps to wrong conclusions.

Page 251. *he had half fulfilled his father's dying wish*—The mill having been purchased by Messrs. Guest & Co., Tom was allowed to occupy the old house at the mill. He had not yet become the owner of the house but by occupying it as a tenant, he had partly fulfilled the dying wish of his father.

Tom's mind was set to the expectation of the worst that could happen—not death but disgrace—Tom imagined that his sister might not have died in an accident but that she might have been seduced by Stephen Guest. If this were true, the disgrace that Maggie had brought upon herself would be worse than death.

Page 252. *conjecture*—guess.

inflexibility—rigidity.

clandestine—stealthy.

Page 253. *to vindicate herself*—to defend or justify herself.

Page 254. *quite destitute of mental resources in this extremity*—unable to think of any plan in this critical position.

Mrs. Jakin the larger and Mrs. Jakin the less—This is a humorous reference to Mrs. Jakin, the mother of Bob, and Mrs. Jakin, the wife of Bob.

Book VII—CHAPTER 2

ST. OGG'S PASSES JUDGMENT

Gist : The return of Maggie to St. Ogg's without having been married to Stephen spreads in the town quickly. The town gentry, especially the women folk, think Maggie's conduct to be unpardonable. She had run away with a man who was almost engaged to her cousin, Lucy. But, even apart from that, the way in which she had returned without getting married showed that she had lost her honour to Stephen. Lucy, meanwhile, lay seriously ill because of the shock that she had received on discovering the elopement of Stephen and Maggie. Maggie, considering all the circumstances, feels most unhappy to have caused indescribable pain to Lucy (and to

Philip). She has alienated her brother and incurred the censure of the society of St. Ogg's. In her misery, she approaches Dr. Kenn for advice and help. Dr. Kenn hears her story and expresses his full sympathy for her. He promises to get her a situation that would enable to her to earn an independent living. He also tells her that Stephen has written a letter to his father accepting full responsibility for what had happened and completely exonerating Maggie of all blame.

Critical Note : This chapter describes the reaction of the Society of St. Ogg's to Maggie's elopement with Stephen. There is a bit of satire in this chapter where the novelist mocks at public opinion which, in reality, is the opinion of the female members of Society. Stephen slightly rises in our estimation when we learn that he has written a letter to his father accepting full blame for the unfortunate incident which has compromised the honour of Maggie. Dr. Kenn, as would be expected of a priest, offers all possible help to Maggie in her misfortune.

Page 255. *elope*—to run away with a lover.

culpability—fault ; guilt.

trousseau—a bride's clothes, etc.

post-marital—occurring after marriage.

in these cases is always of the feminine gender.........not the world but the world's wife—In these sentences, George Eliot aptly describes the meaning of "public opinion". "Public opinion" does not mean the opinion of all the people in Society. It means only the opinion of the *female* members of Society. Here George Eliot satirically conveys the idea that women are rash in forming unfavourable opinions and that they jump to conclusions without going fully into a case.

Explanation with reference to the context : *It was clear that he had given way in spite of himself......else what would become of Society ?* These lines are taken from George Eliot's novel *The Mill On The Floss* and express, in a satirical vein, the attitude of the people of St. Ogg's towards Maggie after

her return from her misadventure with Stephen. The society of St. Ogg's took a very serious view of Maggie's misconduct but was inclined to be lenient towards Stephen. The society of St. Ogg's believed that it was as a result of Maggie's initiative that Stephen ran away with her. Society also believed that Stephen had got rid of Maggie as soon as he could. Society was not prepared to take Stephen's letter exonerating Maggie at its face value. Society thought that Stephen, on accout of his generosity and gallantry, had written that letter to protect Maggie, and that in actual fact Maggie had been responsible for the elopement. The phrase "the world's wife" is used by George Eliot for the female members of Society. According to George Eliot, public opinion means the opinion not of the whole world but the opinion of the women of the world. George Eliot is, of course, here mocking at the self-righteousness of the women who never lose an opportunity of commenting, and passing judgments, on other people. Women indulge in a lot of gossip and it is their habit to criticize and condemn those who seem to have done some wrong, without going into the merits of the case. They pass judgments in accordance with the conventional moral standards. Indeed, women think themselves to be the custodians of social morality.

Page 257. *Rectory*—the residence of a Vicar or Rector.

Book VII—CHAPTER 3

SHOWING THAT OLD ACQUAINTANCES ARE CAPABLE OF SURPRISING US

Gist : Aunt Glegg offers her full support to Maggie in the latter's misfortune. This is something unexpected from a harsh-tempered lady like Aunt Glegg. But Aunt Glegg believes that it is the duty of all human beings to stand by their kin in such situations in order to protect the family name, unless the gravity of the offence alleged to have been committed is proved beyond the least doubt. Maggie feels sorry that for her sake her mother has also to suffer a lot of discomfort. Maggie receives a letter from Philip expressing his unshakable faith in Maggie and asserting the constancy of his love for her.

Critical Note : We see in this chapter an unexpected and unlikely gesture of kindness from Aunt Glegg towards Maggie. We find that there is some good in this miserly, bullying, and "contrary" woman. Philip's letter to Maggie confirms our impression about the constancy of his love for her. The letter shows Philip's intensely emotional nature, besides revealing his faith in Maggie in spite of the unfavourable view that Society might have taken of Maggie's conduct.

Page 260. *reproof*—rebuke ; reproach.

unequivocally—unambiguously ; undoubtedly.

rectitude—uprightness ; correct behaviour.

ideas of clanship—a bond that holds together the members of a clan or a family.

equity—fairness and justice.

Page 261. Baxter's *Saint's Rest*—Richard Baxter (1615—1691): eminent divine who suffered imprisonment for his Non conformist views. He wrote many books of which the best known are *The Saint's Ever-Lasting Rest* and *Call Of The Unconverted*.

extry—extra

Bruised mind—injured mind.

Book VII—CHAPTER 4

MAGGIE AND LUCY

Gist : In spite of his best efforts, Dr. Kenn fails to find a job for Maggie in St. Ogg s. The fact is that Maggie is now looked down upon as a degraded and almost as a fallen woman. Dr. Kenn who is now a widower decides to appoint Maggie as a governess for his children. The people, however, do not take a charitable view of Dr. Kenn's action. According to the town gossip, Dr. Kenn intends to marry Maggie. In order to protect his reputation, Dr. Kenn feels compelled to break off his connection with Maggie. Meanwhile Lucy has improved. She has learnt about Stephen's letter to his father. She takes the earliest opportunity to meet Maggie

and to tell her that she has no grudge against her. Both the girls sob in each other's embrace. A great weight has now been lifted off Maggie's heart.

Critical Note : In this chapter we again see the unkindness and callousness of society who refuses to take a human view of Maggie's conduct. Society now treats Maggie almost as an outcast. Indeed, Society's slavery to conventions is ridiculous. Even Dr. Kenn has to yield before the pressure of public opinion. There is also in this chapter a touching scene between Maggie and Lucy, the scene of their reunion and Lucy's forgiveness of Maggie. Lucy's broad-mindedness and generosity are sharply contrasted with the narrow-mindedness and hardness of the Society of St. Ogg's.

Page 264. *legatee*—a person to whom some legacy has been left. In this case, the legatee is Maggie to whom Mrs. Glegg was to leave a legacy, according to her will.

aghast—bewildered, astonished and frightened.

imputations—accusations.

Page 265. *crotchets*—strange notions.

beguiled—deceived.

apostle—follower of Lord Jesus Christ and preacher of Christ's message.

Peter—one of the foremost apostles.

penitence—repentance.

burthen—burden,

repugnance—disgust.

Page 266. *irretrievable*—that which cannot be retrieved ; that for which no amends can be made.

Page 267. *wrung forth*—forced out.

Book VII—CHAPTER 5

THE LAST CONFLICT

Gist : Maggie receives a letter from Stephen. In this letter Stephen again pleads with Maggie not to forsake him. The letter, which is written in a tone of passionate entreaty, revives the conflict in Maggie's mind. But once again her sense of duty to Lucy and to Philip returns with an even greater intensity. The conflict ends with Maggie's holding Stephen's letter to the candle and letting it búrn. Just at this time she finds water flowing into the room. She at once realizes that it is the flood of which there had been some talk in the town for the past several days. She gets into one of the boats that have been driven by the flood close to Bob Jakin's house where she has been living. Her one thought now is to go to the rescue of her brother and mother who must be in great danger. All her old love of her brother rises in her heart and she looks forward to a new understanding with him. She succeeds in rowing close to Tom's house and shouts for Tom. Tom gets into the boat, his mother having already left for Garum Firs a couple of days earlier. Tom is overwhelmed by Maggie's love for him and by the risk that she has taken in coming to his rescue. A little later, they see huge pieces of wooden machinery being carried on the flood towards them. They cannot get the boat out of the way of those floating masses. Tom and Maggie hold each other in a close embrace, ready to perish. A few moment later, brother and sister go down into the water in an embrace, never to be parted.

Critical Note : This chapter describes the climax of the tragedy of Maggie's life. This is a painful chapter which shows the cruel had of Fate. The final tragedy of Maggie and Tom is not due to any of their actions, but simply a result of the cruelty of Fate. George Eliot possessed a keen sense of the mystery of Fate and in this chapter she has given expression to her feeling that the ways of fate are mysterious and unpredictable. In the opinion of some critics, the final tragedy takes place rather abruptly and, therefore, gives a jerk to the reader's mind. There is certainly much truth in this criticism.

The reader feels stunnned by the tragedy that overtakes brother and sister.

Page 268. *battling with her old shadowy enemies that were for ever sullen and rising again*—struggling with thoughts and temptations which she had suppressed and crushed but which were again rising in her heart.

drought—dryness ; dry weather.

equinox—the time when the sun crosses the equator making the night equal in length to the day, about twenty-first March and twenty-third September.

sombre—serious and grave ; sad.

forebodings—forecasts ; predictions ; presentiments.

Page 269. *remonstrance*—protest.

parishioners—people living in a parish.

Page 272. *ajar*—half open ; partly open.

lanthorn—lantern.

expedients—methods.

CONCLUSOIN

Gist : Five years pass. Every man and every woman mentioned in the story is still alive, except Tom and Maggie. Dorlcote Mill is rebuilt. Close to the grave of Mr. Tulliver a tomb was erected very soon after the flood for the burial of the dead bodies of Tom and Maggie. On the tomb were inscribed the following words : "In their death they were not divided." Stephen at last marries Lucy and both sometimes visit the tomb to pay their homage to Maggie. Philip is now always solitary and spends much of his time among the trees of the Red Deeps where he had spent the golden moments of his life in the company of Maggie.

Critical Note : The conclusion is very poignant. The unreaso ableness of Fate is emphasised by the fact that only Tom and Maggie were drowned in the flood and that every

other character in the story survived. The solitariness and grief of philip are very touching. Brother and sister who had never been able to get on with each other well during their life-time were united with each other by death. What a union ! The conclusion of the story leaves us in a state of profound grief.

Page 277. *ravages*—destruction.

lading and unlading—loading and unloading.

laid prostrate—laid flat.

and it was visited at different moments by two men—The tomb in which Maggie was buried along with her brother was visited at different times by Stephen and Philip both of whom had deeply and passionately loved Maggie.

Page 278. *One of them visited the tomb again with a sweet face beside him*—Stephen was now married to Lucy. Lucy would accompany Stephen to visit Maggie's grave.

the other was always solitary—the other man was Philip who was now most of the time alone.

The End